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LAST DAYS OF THE GERMAN FLEET

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LAST DAYS OF THE GERMAN FLEET

BY

LUDWIG FREIWALD

TRANSLATED BY

MARTIN MOORE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

HECTOR C. BYWATER

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MAP (*at end*).

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INTRODUCTION

WHEN the German High Seas Fleet mutinied in October, 1918, Ludwig Freiwald, the author of this book, was serving as a bluejacket in the battleship *Nassau*. He was therefore a spectator of the main events he describes. Unlike many, if not the majority, of his lower-deck comrades at that period, he held strong nationalistic views, which inevitably colour his narrative. But when full allowance is made for its partisan bias, his book must still be regarded as a valuable record of a great historical event.

The mass mutiny in the High Seas Fleet which hastened the inevitable collapse of Imperial Germany is without precedent, certainly in modern and probably in ancient history. It derived special significance from the fact that the navy, above all other national institutions, was an expression of Germany's will to become an Imperial Power of the first magnitude. Essentially a creation of the Kaiser's, it was from its inception a microcosm of the social system over which he presided.

In the navy were reproduced all the petty but rigid class distinctions of that system, but in an exaggerated form, owing to the physical restrictions of barrack-room and shipboard life. Between officers and men there yawned a gulf which it was rank heresy even to attempt to bridge. The disciplinary code had undergone little change since the days of Frederick the Great. It tended to reduce men to automatons, and infractions were punished with a severity almost mediæval. The wonder

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is, not that this antiquated system broke down in the end, but that it resisted for so long the disruptive influences to which it was exposed for more than four years of war.

While our author attributes the naval revolt primarily to the intrigues of pacifists and traitors, he is forced to acknowledge the demoralising effects of prolonged inaction on the *personnel* of the High Seas Fleet. There is, indeed, much evidence from other sources that sheer boredom was the root cause of the trouble. The lower-deck, it is true, had other grievances. Rations were scanty, and, in the last two years, of the worst quality, while at the same time the officers continued to enjoy every luxury. Leave was unnecessarily curtailed, and though the Fleet did not stir from its anchorage for months at a time, the endless round of drill and routine went on with soul-destroying regularity.

Under the stimulus of action, or even of prospective action, men will endure the worst hardships without a murmur. The German sailors as a body were brave and patriotic men who asked nothing better than to strike a blow for their country. At Jutland, as in every other engagement, their conduct was exemplary to a degree. Yet the same men who on May 31st, 1916, had fought with the utmost gallantry and steadiness in the face of heavy odds, broke into open mutiny eighteen months later rather than go out to seek battle again. Something more than the circulation of defeatist pamphlets and the diatribes of mess-deck politicians is needed to explain this extraordinary change of heart.

From the beginning of the war the High Seas Fleet was condemned to a passive *rôle*, partly by the superior strength of the British Navy, but still more as a matter of deliberate policy. By the Kaiser and his entourage it was regarded less as a fighting instrument than as a bargaining asset, to be jealously conserved until the time

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came to discuss peace terms. It was therefore forbidden to fight except under conditions which excluded the possibility of defeat, or even of any serious loss in ships. Fettered by these ridiculous orders, successive commanders-in-chief could only carry out tip-and-run raids and pointless " advances " within safe distance of the German Bight. Such feeble operations could have no effect on the war. Jutland was an encounter not " according to plan," and, although the High Seas Fleet acquitted itself brilliantly on that occasion, its narrow escape only confirmed the Kaiser in his resolve to take no risks with his precious fleet.

Save for a brief period after Jutland, the German bluejackets had little respect for the higher naval command. On two occasions—the Heligoland Bight, August 28th, 1914, and the Dogger Bank, January 24th, 1915—isolated German forces were surprised and badly mauled by the British owing to lack of battleship support. While German cruisers, their frantic wireless appeals for aid unheeded, were being shot to pieces off Heligoland, the Kaiser's Dreadnought squadrons lay safely anchored behind the mine barrier at Wilhelmshaven. It is not surprising that when the crippled survivors of these actions limped back to port they listened stonily to the cheers from the battleships and sneered at these great ships as " kennel hounds." Thus the seeds of disintegration were sown very early in the war, to germinate rapidly in the crowded mess-decks of what was virtually an interned fleet.

Perhaps the most dramatic passages in this book are those which describe the mental anguish of the officers and loyal ratings who watched this mighty edifice of naval power crumbling before their eyes. It is impossible not to admire the devotion to duty which impelled the senior officers to accept the humiliating task of disarming the High Seas Fleet and handing it over into foreign

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custody. That act of moral courage went far to absolve them from whatever blame they merited by reason of their unimaginative treatment of the lower-deck in more prosperous times.

The antecedents of the German naval mutiny, as related in these pages, provide a fund of material for the psychologist and the political philosopher, while to the general reader the book will convey a vivid picture of life in the High Seas Fleet during the most critical phases of the Great War.

HECTOR C. BYWATER.

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LAST DAYS OF THE GERMAN FLEET

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LAST DAYS OF THE GERMAN FLEET

Schillig roadstead.

The moon is shining pale above Jade Bay and its light plays upon the quiet waters.

It sheds a faint radiance over Schillig signal station, drifts over the scores of low, black guard-boats of the mine-barrier to the mainland opposite, lingers above the lonely beacon, lends a dim gleam to the waters of the Weser mouth, and then glides back again to the outpost ships of the German High Seas Fleet, towering like fortresses out of the darkness.

Through the aerials of the wireless stretching from mast to mast, and through the cables and shrouds, the moon traces long streaks on the bridges and decks. Then it lingers on the turrets of the heavy artillery, caresses the long barrels of the eleven-inch and fifteen-inch guns, and peers inquisitively through the open hatches of the upper decks into the dark casemates and battery decks, where hang the serried hammocks of the sleeping crews.

Only now and then does thin smoke from the funnels obscure its view.

Silently it climbs the giant tripod masts of the modern battleships *Hindenburg* and *Bayern* that lie motionless at anchor behind the outpost ships.

But upon the great flagship of the Fleet, *Baden*, it squanders its silver light, bringing out with telling clear-

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ness the magnificent lines of this floating fortress. The superstructure of the giant vessel gleams in the moonlit landscape of the night like the citadel of the Holy Grail.

Towards Wilhelmshaven the moon picks out clearly the contours of the imperial and royal ships, which, in obedience to command, cast anchor that evening in Vosslapp roadstead. Tranquillity and peace are the very breath of this nocturnal scene, yet it conceals mighty forces of war.

Dreadnoughts, battle cruisers, pre-Dreadnought battleships, light cruisers, torpedo-boats.

In all, there are some forty thousand seamen in these floating fortresses. Suddenly the Morse lamps flash from the signal yard-arm of the Fleet flagship. Ship speaks to ship in the night.

On all the bridges the signalmen leap into activity. The command that rouses the stokers from their sleep runs through the Fleet :

" Raise steam in all boilers ! "

Runners hasten aft over the dark decks from the bridges. The quarter-deck sentries start out of their doze.

Loud knocking echoes in the narrow alleyways leading to the officers' quarters. The Officer of the Watch, the First Officer and the Chief Engineer are roused.

The wireless-room messenger comes out of the Captain's office. The Commanding Officer is already up.

Below, in the bottom of the ship, there is hubbub.

All boilers raise steam !

The electric lights flash on in the stokers' quarters. The brilliance strikes down on to the eyelids of the sleeping men.

They start up in their hammocks.

" Raise steam in all boilers ! Turn out ! " shout the engine-room petty-officers.

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" First to fourth stokers' watch lash up hammocks ! "

Figures heavy with sleep clamber on deck.

Trousers, shirt, sweat-rag.

Clatter of boots ; loud shouts ; laughter.

The mess-decks empty, and the stokers go down into the engine-rooms.

All boilers raise steam !

The dimly-lighted clock on the middle-deck of the battleship *Nassau* points to twenty minutes past two.

Voices are raised. Heavy steps echo through the night.

Someone opens the door under the after bridge, and a chill draught blows through the room. The shivering men draw their blankets tighter around them.

A low whistle. Then the voice of the petty-officer of the watch :

" Second cutter crew stand by to weigh anchor ! "

No one stirs. The door closes again with a bang.

Below, the order is passed warily through the ship.

In the third and fourth port positions, where the watch division is sleeping, fully clothed, on the matting laid down on deck, the deck messenger steps cautiously over the sleeping forms and shines his lantern in the face of this man and that.

" Karl—Gorch—Peter—Schmidt—Nolte ! Get up ! We're putting to sea ! Navigation parties stand by ! "

Then the disturber of rest disappears, and the casemate is plunged once more in darkness.

Two-thirty.

Figures in monkish cowls move to and fro at the bridge guard rail. Dark shadows stand on the forecastle.

Light signals flash out here and there.

Commands ring through the night.

The weighing of the anchor is begun.

Two-forty.

Heavy clouds of dark smoke hang over Schillig and

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Vosslapp roadsteads. For minutes at a stretch the moon is darkened by the smoke of the light cruisers and torpedo-boat flotillas that are raising steam. The smoke of the outpost craft mingles with that of the armoured cruisers as they approach the gate of the anti-submarine net. The outpost zone of the German Fleet seems to be shifting. Vessel after vessel leaves her anchorage and, as though drawn by a magnet, joins the long line of advancing colossi.

Twenty-two super-dreadnoughts, sixteen light cruisers, and seventy-two torpedo-boats and destroyers pass the net and set their course for the Outer Jade light-ship.

The majority of the crews are still asleep.

It is long past three. The leading vessel, *Bayern*, is lying athwart the Outer Jade light-ship ; a signal flashes out from the main masthead, and the vessel veers a few degrees to starboard. All the ships veer at the same point, and the crews know that the course is set northward.

On every deck at the same moment the shrill blast of the boatswain's pipe is heard. " All hands on deck " sounds loud and long. " Hurry, there ! Hurry ! Both watches lash up hammocks ! "

* * * * *

Roused from deep sleep, the men start up in their hammocks.

The battery whistles are shrilling, and petty-officers of the watch are bellowing out orders.

" Both duty watches lash up hammocks ! "

The reveille sounds along all the decks. Repeated over and over again with mechanical regularity, it rouses even the heaviest sleepers.

Again the whistles thrill through the casemates, now cleared of hammocks.

" Both duty watches fall in for inspection on the quarter-deck ! "

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A thousand men—officers, warrant-officers, petty-officers, leading-seamen, and other ratings emerge from the hatchways and hasten to the quarter-deck.

Heavy guns, secondary armament, ammunition parties, searchlight crews, leak-stoppers and repair parties, reserve groups, bridge messengers, are standing in their appointed places. The submarine look-out men, the torpedo personnel and mechanics are at their posts.

"Attention!"

The voice of the First Officer rings out sharply over the quarter-deck. The thousand stand like men of iron. The waves of the North Sea pound furiously against the sides of the cruising vessel.

The tall figure of the Commanding Officer appears.

"Both duty watches standing by, sir!"

"Thank you."

"Stand at ease!"

Then once more the voice of the First Gunnery Officer.

"All men to action stations. Guns ready. Man the guns!"

* * * * *

On every ship the same scenes are being enacted at the same time.

Over the long, broad decks hasten hundreds of men, disappearing down the hatchways, into the gun-turrets and casemates, and up to the bridge. The upper-decks are deserted. The many inner compartments are silent as the grave. The thousands of men have vanished into thin air.

Yet they are there.

They have been swallowed by the heavy artillery turrets, the ammunition magazines, the torpedo flats, the telegraph control positions.

There, there is life. Telephones and voice-pipes are

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tested. Elevators rattle. Ammunition parties set to. Gun-sight transmitters are buzzing. Little indicators glow. Numbers appear on them, and then vanish. Switch-over drill is practised.

Everything proceeds swiftly yet surely in the appointed order, thanks to the everlasting exercises, source of so much grumbling among the men.

Reports that the guns are " cleared away " are received in rapid succession at the control positions. And then from one ship after another the report that all is cleared for action flashes ahead to the flagship.

Course : Northward.

The first Scouting Group, consisting of four battle cruisers, has already left Heligoland far behind.

Giants of the night. They are steaming eighteen sea miles ahead of the main body of the Fleet. Torpedo-boats screen the battle cruisers on either side, and encircle them like a pack of black hounds. Far ahead, thrown out in semi-circular formation, move the sombre shadows of the light cruisers. They are directed by the flagship of the battle cruiser squadron, whose vanguard they constitute.

Morning draws near.

Like grey monsters the four great vessels advance through the half-light of the approaching day. Bright and clear the day rises out of the sea.

The waters of the North Sea are bluish-green. There is a long, slow swell on the sea. The grey battleships stand out dazzingly against the shimmering surface of the water. A proud and splendid picture. The shapely decks. The angular turrets ; the long, menacing barrels of the guns. On the bridges stand the officers with upturned coat collars ; beside them are the sentries and signallers. Multi-coloured signal flags flutter in the wind. Ratings off duty stand about the decks, gazing, like the

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muzzles of the guns, out over the empty sea. Ahead, on the broad horizon is a faint line, silver-bright. One of our light cruisers.

It is nearly noon. The huge ships thrust irresistibly forward.

Course : Northward. High speed.

Sixty miles behind, the High Seas Fleet is following.

Eighteen super-dreadnoughts.

Six light cruisers.

Fifty-two torpedo-boats.

Bayern is leading the van. General course : Northward. The Fleet is performing evolutions. Line ahead. Line abreast. Altering course.

" P.Z.," tactical manœuvres, are practised.

Flag signals. Semaphores. Morse.

The ships form into divisions and squadrons, turn inward, fall into line ahead.

Again the course is changed. The speed-cones rise and fall.

Full power. Half speed. Full speed.

The battle line, the divisions, the squadron units veer and turn, precise, uniform, faultless. A single will is behind all.

A single command. A single obedience.

The vessels maintain battle formation. General course : Northward.

Dense clouds of smoke drift over the sea, churned into a thousand shapes by the many evolutions. The smoke from the funnels casts great shadows on the bare decks.

In the casemates and turrets gun exercises are being practised.

" Long-range action, port side ! "

The turret officers, gun-layers and gun-captains have their eyes to the sighting telescopes.

" Point of aim ! "

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The gunners at their posts. Hands to wheels and levers. Range is adjusted, deflection put on sights.

"Seventeen thousand yards!"

"Target bearing starboard quarter."

The breech flies open. The breech claps to.

"Salvo-Fire!"

"Switch over to left! Follow the pointer!"

The barrels swing to the left. Tactical manœuvres continue.

At last three flags appear on the bridge of the Flagship *Baden:* Ulli. Bertha. Ida.

"Exercises concluded!"

The duty watches are dismissed. The Fleet forms into line ahead for cruising formation.

Guarded against submarine attack by a screen of torpedo-boats in front and on either flank, the Fleet steams at full cruising speed farther and farther northwards. A scene that has branded itself deep in tens of thousands of hearts.

Ineradicable in its force and grandeur.

One hundred and thirty feet above sea level, in the spotting-top of the battleship *König*, sit Sub-lieutenant Zenker and a leading-seaman.

A splendid panorama presents itself to their gaze. The armoured giants are following *König* in a long line. The ships of the First Squadron, at the rear of the Fleet, are already lost in the haze. Smoke is beating down from fifty funnels. The sky becomes smooth and flat. The sea darkens. The horizon closes in upon them. The patches of light over the water to westward disappear. The huge vessels aft lose their clear outlines. Like shapeless monsters, like fabulous caterpillars, they crawl irresistibly over the grey and unillumined surface of the sea.

The leading-seaman is turning over the pages of

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Weyer's "Pocketbook of the World's Fleets" and marvelling at the multitude of British warships illustrated there in pictures and silhouettes, together with detailed descriptions.

Sub-lieutenant Zenker is gazing northwards. The battle cruisers must be at Jutland. Would that the reckoning might come to-day! The British. But instead comes the order from the gunnery control tower: "Descend from the foretop!"

Fleet in night cruising order.

The Nor'wester drives the dark waves higher and crowns them with caps of foam; sudden squalls strike the decks.

Ship after ship thrusts itself panting and snorting through the darkness. The funnels belch forth showers of sparks.

Sombre shadows glide swiftly alongside the Fleet. Torpedo-boats. Now and then a flashing signal. The night is starless.

Staff officers are gathered in the charthouse of the flagship. Admiral von Hipper.

On the table, charts: squares.* Courses laid out. A red line. Far beyond it four dots. The battle cruisers. The Fleet is steaming towards the red line.

The officer marks off mile after mile.

Order of the Commander-in-Chief to the Admiral commanding the Battle Cruiser Force. Turn 16 points (*i.e.*, reverse your direction).

The red line is reached.

The High Seas Fleet retraces its course.

Midnight.

Sombre and dumb the Fleet passes on its southerly course through the North Sea.

* War charts are divided into squares, each numbered, so that instead of giving latitude and longitude when making a signal it is only necessary to say: "Such-and-such a ship in No. — square."

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Ostfriesland is leading the First Squadron.

Watches are relieved.

Underneath the forward conning-tower, which is surmounted by the armoured gunnery control tower, is a small compartment in which sit three telegraphists, surrounded by telephones, voice-pipes, switch levers, range transmitters and other apparatus bearing inscriptions in green and red colours—green signifying "starboard," and red "port."

Leading-seaman Ullrich shouts up through the perforated hatch.

"After bridge relieved!"

"Heavy artillery relieved!"

"Secondary armament relieved!"

Then the crews of all stations are aroused. Three men chant monotonously into the telephones.

"Identity signals!"

"Night signalling apparatus. Call: red! Answer: red green!"

"Funnel rings. Call: green. Answer: green red!"

"Morse code. Call: Dora! Answer: Paul!"

The telegraphists in the turrets and casemates repeat these identity signals and pass them on to the various stations. Then the ship subsides once more into her nocturnal lethargy.

The battle cruisers have rejoined the Fleet.

They now form its rearguard.

Derfflinger is leading.

A six-inch casemate. Iron bulkheads. An iron floor. Iron deck-beams. The compartment is in semi-darkness. Only the emergency light is burning. The place seems empty. But it is not. In one corner a sailor with head-'phones on. Beside him a petty-officer and two men. They are dozing. Only the swish of the water is heard.

The polished breech gleams palely in the gun emplace-

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ment, like an exhortation. A cigarette glows. For the space of a second the smoker's face is illuminated by a dim light. The telescopes are manned. Human vision, given tenfold strength by the prismatic lenses, ranges in systematic search over the dark waters. At the horizon the searcher's gaze lingers a long time. It is arrested. Gropes farther. A shadow. A low-hanging cloud. Nothing.

" Glenz ! " The telegraphist starts up.

" What are we doing now ? "

He speaks in a low voice into the telephone. The man at the control position answers the call. The same question : " What are we doing now ? "

A surly reply comes from above.

" Course South-West. Going back to port since 11 p.m."

Glenz shrugs his shoulders. To be sure, it matters nothing to him what course they are steering. But once again their guns have not been brought to bear on the enemy. Damn it ! Then, aloud :

" Going back to port since 11 p.m."

The men at the telescope swing round. The gun-captain gets up. With a gesture of baffled rage, Leading-seaman Seifert flings his cigarette-end into the scupper, where it goes out with a hiss. Disappointment is written on their faces. They break into curses.

" Senseless waste of coal ! "

" Why the Hell turn back at all ! "

" Attacking empty space like this ! "

The battery officer comes through the casemate. On his countenance the same anger is written. This is no time to crack a joke with him. They let him pass by in silence.

Weary, oppressed, indifferent, the watch carries on. The boatswain glances at his watch. It is only 3 a.m. Everything has suddenly become damnably boring. He

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sits down and stares at the shells stacked in readiness beside the gun.

Dawn.

The home-coming German Fleet emerges slowly from the leaden light of the early morning. The searchlight crews go off duty. The masthead look-outs climb up to their posts in the foretop and maintop. The watch continues.

Bright sunlight spreads over the sea. Above, a blue and cloudless sky. The huge grey ships strung out in line ahead formation.

A signal from the Flagship. The message runs swiftly fore and aft along the line. The leading ship veers a few degrees to port. The rest follow in obedience. Swift as an express train the High Seas Fleet speeds over the shimmering water.

Twice more watches are changed. Again darkness draws on. Heligoland beacon flashes out.

It throws its beams far over the German Bight. Like shadows the ships pass.

The Outer Jade channel comes into sight. The watches leave their posts.

The cruise is over.

SUBMARINE WARFARE IN OCTOBER, 1918

The chief burden of active warfare is resting on the shoulders of the submarine crews. In submarines that are so puny in comparison with the vast spaces of the ocean these men perform deeds of unimaginable daring.

The great struggle against the Island Empire of Britain has entered its final stage.

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The Channel barrier between Dover and Calais is finished.

A barrier of beams, nets, contact-mines, listening apparatus, and yet more mines. Extending from the surface to the sea-bed.

In the triple row of nets mines that can be exploded by electricity from the shore are laid at all levels.

Besides these, patrol vessels of all sorts.

By night, magnesium flares that light up the Channel as bright as day from shore to shore.

The submarine base in Flanders evacuated.

Now the only remaining routes to the Atlantic pass north of England.*

From the Baltic, the British minefields in the " wet triangle " † are avoided by taking the route through the Sound or the Great Belt, Cattegat or Skagerrack.

But in the far north the German submarines find their path blocked by a huge mine-belt extending from the Orkneys to Norway.

The barrier of death.

A vast American plan.

One hundred thousand mines lurk here, like spiders in their web waiting for prey.

At all levels American submarine mines containing four hundred and fifty pounds of explosives await U-boats approaching beneath the surface. In front, patrol lines.

And yet . . . Again and again the S.O.S. calls of sinking steamers round the English coast flash out the news that German submarines are there. The listening-posts report the sound of screws. The daring men of the submarines send ship after ship to the bottom, thus striking England in her most vulnerable spot.

* North-about round Scotland is meant. *Trans.*
† A German popular name for the Bight.

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U-BOAT AT WORK BY NIGHT

Atlantic.

For the space of a second the moon broke through the cloud-draped heavens and shed a silvery light on the wave crests of one sector of a sea front that covered thousands of square miles.

Then the rent in the heavenly vault closed again, and the darkness of night descended in redoubled blackness upon the Atlantic Ocean off the Scilly Isles.

A long, low shadow slid like a wild cat over the peaks of the mountainous waves, vanished for minutes at a time in the pitch-black troughs, and rose phantom-like again, only to lose itself in the next valley. Only a squat, angular superstructure stood out in silhouette against the rise and fall of the waves ; but even this could no longer be distinguished a hundred yards away in the perilous blackness of the night.

Submarine 240 on a war cruise.

Behind the breastwork of the conning-tower, five figures :

The captain, Lieutenant-Commander Hartung.

The officer of the watch, Sub-lieutenant von Schulz.

Boatswain's mate Paul, second-class gunlayer.

Leading-seaman Ehmsen, a sailor by profession.

The helmsman, Hans Kirsten.

Great gusts of wind swept across the stern, the foaming waves of the Atlantic rolled over the flat bows and broke into spray against the conning-tower, each time throwing a shower of water into the faces of the five men.

The five stood motionless. Their eyes gazed defiantly over the wave crests. They took turns at searching the enveloping darkness through powerful glasses.

They knew these nights on the high seas, full of many sounds. There was the dull rumble of the sea. The

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waves struck one another in bursts of spume. They swept with a smack over the deck. With a gurgling sound they flowed back.

In everlasting succession. Again and yet again.

The strange hum of the Diesel engines mingled with the chanting voice of the wind.

Water trickled off the men's oilskins and fell splashing at their feet. From the open hatchway the voices of their comrades reached them. Snatches of gramophone music were borne swiftly away on the wind. Ehmsen was gazing diagonally ahead. Something huge, dark, white-backed, bore down upon him. A wave. Resiliently the vessel received its impact. Foam was flung high into the air. Then the vessel slid boldly over and onward. Once more the salt, wet tongue of the universal sea shot out to lick the faces of the men.

"Sacramento!" muttered Boatswain Paul, as he wiped the salt water from his eyes. In that darkness an enemy might lurk, swift and near. Cloud and water were blent in one. The eye could reach scarce a thousand yards ahead.

The horizon was completely blotted out. Redoubled vigilance, therefore. Here the eye was everything.

Black. Dark. Night. White foam-caps the sole relief. Nothing besides. A man could scarcely see the face of the comrade beside him.

"Sacramento!"

Leading-seaman Ehmsen started suddenly erect. His pointing hand shot out in front of the captain's face.

"A dark shadow ahead to the right!"

Two pairs of binoculars were raised like lightning. A massive form, still confused but rapidly growing larger and blacker, was approaching to starboard.

Ehmsen's eagle eye had detected it at once.

"A steamer coming towards us!"

"A thousand yards!"

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Quick as thought Commander Hartung summed up the situation. He had only a matter of seconds in which to make his decision. Calmly and distinctly he shouted his orders into the voice-pipe.

The alarm bell roused the crew. The "Hohenfriedberger March" on the gramophone broke off abruptly. Hurrying steps were heard; shouts rang out. Bulkhead-doors banged to.

Then "all cleared for action" was reported to the control-room.

"All hands to diving stations!"

It had taken barely a minute. The time was exactly four minutes to ten p.m.

Submarine U. 240 had veered and was now travelling at a distance of about eight hundred yards from her victim.

The steamer's direction and speed were ascertained. The submarine reduced speed to nine knots.

Below, a voice asked: "What's happening up there?"

From above, someone answered: "Transport sighted; first torpedo just about to be launched!"

Still U. 240 was moving along level with the doomed ship.

What was she carrying? Troops, war materials, food?

Commander Hartung wasted no time pondering the question.

This was war.

"Full speed ahead!"

With a roar the submarine's engines drove her more swiftly forward.

The black shadow of the victim was lost in the darkness.

"First and second torpedo-tubes prepare to fire!"

A few seconds later the Captain saw the "all-clear" sign appear on the illuminated indicator.

Order to the helmsman:

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" Turn sixteen points ! "

To the engine-room : " Half speed ahead ! "

The shadow was back again.

" A thousand yards ! "

Now the rapidly approaching ship began to stand out from the vagueness of her background.

" Nine hundred yards ! "

The huge contours of the gigantic steamship rose dark against the night sky. The gleam of her bow-wave betrayed her.

" Eight hundred yards ! "

The resolute face of the Captain bent over the night sighting director. His keen eye took the bearings.

Now the vessel ran into the line of fire.

Her massive form towered threateningly against the background of the night.

" First tube ! "

" Ready ! "

" Torpedo in position ! "

" All sights are bearing."

Tall as a great building, a dark wall swept past.

Foremast, bridge, funnels. . . .

" Fire ! "

The pressure of his hand on the electric button released the torpedo.

" Well away ! " said Ehmsen, as the submarine quivered under the recoil and heeled to port.

Three grim, determined faces leaned out over the parapet . . . over yonder a terrific explosion rent the night and darkness.

An all-shattering crash, re-echoing in a thousand peals of thunder, shot heavenward with a burst of flame and glowing fragments. The submarine started into violent movement. A monstrous impetus flung her out of the water. Her screws beat the air. The aerial U-boat had

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become a reality. Sudden claps of thunder fell raging from the clouds. The heaving sea was cleft asunder. Like a plummet the U-boat dropped into the yawning gulf. The waters closing over her were flung high into the air by the impact. Her conning-tower and bows emerged again, only to be drawn down once more into the inferno of battering waves. The howling sea belched fire and great shafts of shooting flame. Thousands of tons of munitions, exploding at brief intervals, shot roaring into the air.

A gigantic firework, reaching to the very clouds, lit up the surface of the ocean for miles around.

Behind the huge pillar of fire, unseen by the men on the submarine, steamers, cruisers and destroyers were dashing in hopeless confusion towards all points of the compass.

After the discharge the men in the torpedo compartment looked anxiously out.

"Thirty," counted Torpedoman Heinze. The same instant an invisible fist struck the men with stunning force.

A mighty blow thrust the submarine upwards, so that they were flung to their knees and then hurled head-over-heels into a corner.

In flagrant violation of all discipline Torpedoman Heinze landed bang on top of his superior officer, Petty-officer Hemprich.

A thunderous sound reverberated through all the compartments. With a dull rumble that swelled to a roar, a seaquake shook U. 240. The electric lights gave two or three jumps and went out.

Darkness reigned. They scrambled cursing to their feet. A second blow, and then a third, flung them into confusion again, to the sound of thunder booming above them and to one side.

They held their breath. The vessel seemed to be

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falling through bottomless space ; she pitched, shuddered, groaned and creaked in every joint.

Somewhere water seemed to be rushing in.

Fresh convulsions swept rumbling through the steel walls. Now she rolled sideways. Now she righted herself again.

The light of a torch groped through the compartment, dimly illuminating the agitated faces. At last the electric light came on again. As the men rose, bruised and bleeding, to their feet the last echo died away.

The tremendous rush of air had flung Ehmsen, Sub-lieutenant Schulz and the Commanding Officer against the opposite side of the conning-tower with such force that they were almost battered into unconsciousness.

A series of thundering shocks swept over them, and the vessel, caught in a monstrous whirlpool, reared and then plunged headlong downwards. The thunder that was crashing down on them from the clouds became suddenly mingled with the rush of engulfing waves. Their hands clutched convulsively for a hold. The water roared in their ears ; penetrating oilskins and garments beneath, it ran cold against their bodies. " It's all up ! " they thought in the same instant of time, and braced themselves, full of angry terror. Almost at the same moment the conning-tower rose out of the water.

Gasping and blowing, they dragged themselves to their feet. An unearthly light blinded their eyes, for the glowing wall still seemed to tower before them. The sea was apparently vomiting fire straight up to heaven and calling down deafening thunder upon their heads. They clutched frantically for fresh hand-hold. The vessel reeled rudderless this way and that. They seemed to be caught in the midst of a cyclone. Red-hot whirlwinds hurtled down without intermission and buried themselves with a sound of thunder in the steel plates of the submarine's hull. With hands and feet the men strove

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to keep an upright posture. The fiery inferno of the detonations pierced their closed eyes like spikes of glowing steel, and the shattering, terrifying crash of the explosions hammered frenzied blows upon their ear-drums. At last they were standing once more upon their feet. Head, shoulders, arms and back were aching. They gazed distraught upon the spectacle before them. The broad pillar of fire rising out of the sea was standing almost motionless in front of them, illuminating the night sea with a supernatural brilliance as bright as day.

Tongues of flame were leaping upwards without a sound. Shimmering smoke was quivering beneath. Black flakes of all sizes were raining from the sky. Shell-splinters.

They fell like hail fore and aft upon the submarine, and sent up fountains of water all around.

" An avenue of silver poplars " was the thought that came to Commander Hartung's mind, and he observed this remarkable phenomenon with the liveliest interest. Bengal lights in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. Doubtless it had been specially arranged in order to break the monotony of these night cruises. Then the pillar of fire sank back into itself. For an instant Ehmsen saw as in a vision the sharp outlines of warships ; but he might have been mistaken.

Once again there was a momentary glimmer out yonder, and then all was levelled in the blackness of night.

Heaving a deep sigh of relief, the Commanding Officer was about to give fresh orders when searchlights flashed out not two thousand yards away, hovered tremulously on the wave-crests, and illuminated the bow-wave of the submarine.

At once came a gun-flash from the shadows racing towards the spot.

Were they destroyers or cruisers ? Who could tell from so brief a glimpse ?

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White jets of water rose round the vessel and then sank back into themselves again.

"Warships! Crash dive!" roared the voice of the Commanding Officer.

Ehmsen leaped first through the hatch into the diving control station; after him the Sub-lieutenant, and last the captain.

The water rushed into the diving-tanks. The turret hatch shut down hermetically. Then the ocean closed over U. 240.

Forty seconds later the depth-gauge stood at sixty-five feet. The enemy warship was thundering away overhead.

The sound of her propellers vibrated in every corner of the submarine. Then muffled detonations left, right and aft set the instruments quivering.

Depth charges.

One hundred and sixty feet below the surface U. 240 hung suspended. Twice more the wireless operator reported the sound of screws to port.

The Commanding Officer was standing with the coxswain, Kreiling, and Sub-lieutenant von Schulz in the conning-tower. Dull-red burned the light.

"Rise to sixty-five feet," ran the order to the men at the hydroplane wheels.

U. 240 rose slowly. She headed southward at half speed.

Silence reigned in the vessel.

Orders fell monotonously into the voice-pipe.

"Rise to thirty feet!"

"To the surface!"

"First bridge watch stand by!"

The conning-tower and the bows broke through, flinging the billows of the Atlantic up in spray; the waters fell again raging into inky darkness; and then the tower rose clear. The watch clambered up through the hatchway.

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Pitch-black was the night; not a star in the heavens. Chill wind and spray greeted these men risen from the bowels of the sea.

The cold caress was pleasant and refreshing to their fevered temples. It was darker even than before, for midnight was approaching.

The Diesel engines started droning into action. The ventilators sucked fresh air into all compartments. The crew were dismissed from diving stations.

After each had breathed his fill of pure sea air on deck, the men not on duty fell asleep one by one in their bunks.

But U. 240 veered a few degrees to port and sped rapidly forward, so that she might be off Plymouth Sound by morning.

U-BOAT ON THE OCEAN BED

That same night her sister ship, U. 241, was lying on the sea-bed in the shelter of Bardsey Island in Cardigan Bay.

Like some huge monster of the deep, she had burrowed her massive form, of nearly one thousand tons displacement, into the sea-bed.

The great mass of water pressed down upon her, lying motionless there, enveloping her in night and dread.

At that great depth the roar of the sea was silenced, and only now and then came the sound of a distant breaker hurling itself against the rocky shore.

Within the submarine all was silent as a dream.

The thirty-two men of the crew lay sleeping in their bunks.

The memory of those last hours still quivered through their slumbers—hours in which they had escaped by a

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hair's breadth the depth charges, steel cables, nets and contact-mines of the furious enemy.

One man cried out aloud ; another started up shuddering in his bunk. But most slept sound and carefree.

In the dim red light of the lamp sat the watch : two leading-seamen, a petty-officer and the officer of the watch. Anyone casting a fleeting glance into the compartment would have taken all four for brothers ; the thousands of miles they had sailed together above and below sea had chiselled their countenances to a single type, hard and angular.

Leading-seaman Sepp Schlager was bending forward, intently examining his sea-boots. The soles weren't exactly cardboard, perhaps. But only the best was good enough for the front. That was what he thought, and he said so without mincing his language.

The officer of the watch nodded agreement. There was a pause, an eerie silence as of a Delphic oracle. Outside, the sea growled like a surly beast. Its sound was like the low, warning rumble of a distant storm.

The whispered conversation of the four men dragged on. After criticising the rations and discussing the success of the cruise, they began to talk about their last leave.

Leading-seaman Friedrichsen said bitterly :

" It's a bloody shame what goes on at home. Crowds of fellows about, all A.1. Soldiers ? You bet ! Cuthberts ! Got weak hearts—indispensable—work of national importance, they tell you without a blush. Fit, hearty, well-fed men, most of 'em."

" That's right," agreed Schlager. " It was just the same at my place. Clear the lot out, that's what I say, sir," he added, turning to the Sub-lieutenant.

Sub-lieutenant Graf stared at his finger-nails. Devil take it, he had seen the state of affairs himself, of course ; but things must be pretty bad now if a simple seaman

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could notice them. What was he to say? Of course the fellows must be cleared out; but who was he to say so? He made no reply. Boatswain Scholz asked in a low voice:

"Doesn't the Government know how things are, sir?"

Three pairs of eyes were fixed inquiringly upon him. He was bound to answer. It was expected of him as an officer, as their superior. Just as the whole crew trusted implicitly in the captain, so these three men expected something of him. His features froze suddenly into an icy smile.

"The new Government has other things to think of. In Berlin they're playing a game that has nothing to do with a successful outcome of the war for us. The men at the front and the Government are as far apart as the Poles!"

He drew a deep breath, and his lips tightened as he went on in a low tone:

"Electoral reform, right of assembly, Government coalitions, and other futile things. That's what we seem to be fighting for. Bringing in democratic bunkum, when what is needed is dictatorship. These politicians are just another breed of wholesale profiteers, making a good thing for themselves out of this war!"

"Gang of scoundrels!", growled Boatswain Scholz under his breath.

"A real change can only come from the Supreme Command!"

The conversation petered out. They wrapped their legs more closely in the blankets, for the coldness of the sea depths could be felt perceptibly inside the submarine. Once more the strange stillness oppressed them. Outside something was dragging along the hull. Then an obscure scraping and scratching sounded on the steel walls.

Leading-seaman Friedrichsen felt a shudder of terror run down his spine. A strange vision came to him. He

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saw fantastic sea monsters crouching on the vessel. Luxuriant plants growing swiftly out of the sea-bed enmeshed her like chains and held her fast. Sea serpents were crawling about, and monstrous creatures were pressing the vessel deeper and deeper into the bottom. Fishes of fabulous shape were swimming silently around. Two gigantic sword-fish were trying to pierce the conning-tower. He gave a start. He had been dreaming with his eyes open. There was his comrade Schlager, there sat Boatswain Scholz, and next to him Sub-lieutenant Graf. He glanced furtively at his watch.

Three o'clock in the morning.

A subdued and eerie rumbling sounded from above. And then once more that silence that seemed to catch them by the throat—or was it the vitiated air of the submarine? They were panting without being aware of it. A pleasant indifference had crept over them. They stared blankly in front of them. All desire to speak had long ceased to exist.

And on top of it all, this deathly stillness.

Graf pulled himself together all of a sudden. He stretched out his right hand and moved his fingers about, as though he were trying to decide whether he was still in the world of the living.

Then he stood up.

"Boatswain Paul!"

"Friedrichsen! Schlager!"

Mechanically they got up and set about regulating the inflow of oxygen, reading the manometer, and listening-in at the hydrophones.

Meanwhile Graf made the round of all compartments, came back to his place, and sat down again.

Then they all squatted beside one another once more. The oxygen had animated them perceptibly. Conversation began to flow. Between whiles they could hear the drip of oil. The coldness rose slowly in the vessel.

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Only the men's heads and shoulders were still in the warm zone.

The situation on the Western front, the retreat in Flanders, and the question of how long the war would last were being debated.

" We didn't start unrestricted submarine warfare soon enough," contended Boatswain Scholz.

" And all this respecting of neutrals ! "

" England made no bones about international agreements when war broke out ! "

" They blockaded us, and no half measures about it. It was a blockade, and that was that. Not a single foreign merchant vessel, carrying contraband or not, has reached our North Sea ports from the Atlantic from that day to this. England doesn't care two pins for international agreements. To hell with the laws of naval warfare, she says—and fixes the rules to suit herself."

Sub-lieutenant Graf paused for breath. A faint, distant rumbling was heard in the silence ; and then the low question from Schlager :

" And what about us ? "

" Our diplomats and military councillors, with their inborn stupidity, observed and fulfilled every point of the law recognised by all naval Powers—although England's barefaced breach of that law was brought home to us with frightful force by the hunger blockade ! "

In the pause that followed Schlager again let fall his provocative, " And what about us ? "

Once more the eerie sound, as of another world, was heard against the steel sides of the submarine. Graf drew a long, deep breath ; it was exhausting even to speak in whispers.

" We've got to fight according to Prize Law. We've got to translate the notes of these blockheaded diplomats into action. Idiocy ! Take only one example. The steamer *Ingeborg*, six thousand tons, carrying foodstuffs

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from Sweden to Newcastle. No objection raised to her going to England, because food is not contraband. And that in 1916, when the second year of the hunger blockade was devastating Germany ! "

Friedrichsen clenched his powerful fist as though to smash the evil at one blow. Breathing heavily, Graf added :

" You went through it yourself, too, Boatswain Scholz."

Yes, Boatswain Scholz of the Imperial Navy had been through it, but, truth to tell, he had not really understood these diplomatic arrangements. Many things had seemed to him quite senseless, and the worst of it was that the views he had permitted himself to entertain on the subject had afterwards turned out to be the right ones. That really grieved him. He felt it as something akin to a moral outrage, for these regulations were made, after all, by people of a rank immeasurably superior to his own. And so he kept silence. There was one comfort. Some day these imbecilities would be noticed. He only hoped it would not then be too late.

" That's what they called war on commerce according to the Law of Prize. The Commander-in-Chief warned us twice over about it."

With that the conversation came to an end. Each followed the train of his own thoughts. The uncanny, oppressive stillness caught them by the throat once more. The leaden-footed minutes dragged on.

They listened to the breathing of their sleeping companions. They glanced at one another with faint smiles. But they spoke no word. From the bottom of the sea their thoughts sped over England, over the North Sea, back to their native land.

At last a soft-spoken order from the officer wrenched them back to cold reality. " Ten to four ; wake the relief watch ! "

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Four a.m.

Shadows rose up in the half-light of the narrow, oblong compartments and emerged as human forms into the illumination of the control station. Whispering voices sounded tonelessly in the sepulchral stillness.

The watch was changed.

The customary formalities were quickly complied with.

"Anything to report?"

"No."

"Compass 180 degrees. Depth 124 feet. Oxygen last attended to at three o'clock."

"Good night."

The four men of the middle-watch silently disappeared, groped for their bunks and sank into them, drooping with weariness. Friedrichsen burrowed down into his blankets, drawing up his knees and thrusting his hands between them. To some question of Schlager's he replied with a faint "Yes," and then fell asleep.

Sub-lieutenant Graf lay awake in the dark, for in spite of his weariness he could not sleep. Something intangible and menacing oppressed his mind and would not let him rest. At first he thought it must be his nerves, strained to breaking-point, that had plunged him suddenly into such profound depression. Then he wondered whether it might not be the weird stillness of the sea depths, setting every nerve on edge; or perhaps the suffocating air of the submarine that made it so difficult to breathe. But that was not it, either. He felt that it was something touching not him alone, but the whole community; and then suddenly he knew: it was anxiety for his country's fate. With this knowledge came a relaxing of his nervous tension. They had been at sea again for a fortnight now. At this moment their vessel lay on the sea-bed. Would the war last much longer? Yesterday they had torpedoed two steamers. Two hundred and forty degrees. Law of

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Prize. Contraband. Effective blockade. Did Friedrichsen know what "effective" meant? Alarm! Depth charges. Compass. Blow the Tanks. Sound of screws. Mines. Ocean. . . .

Slowly everything fell away from him, and he sank into a deep and dreamless sleep.

The morning watch found themselves something to do in order to shake off their sleepiness. They adjusted the many ingenious instruments, listened-in at the hydrophones, and then sat down together again in the control station.

The leaden stillness seemed to hold time itself a prisoner. Heavily the men drew breath, and the sneaking malice in the air exhausted them.

Engine-room Artificer Hennig asked in a whisper about the morning duties.

"Wake the Commanding Officer at six-thirty. At six-forty all men to diving stations. Then to the surface," replied the engineer. Silence once more. Their limbs became stiff. They pulled themselves together. Must keep awake at all costs.

"Damned ticklish situation yesterday. 'Sparks' counted seventy-eight depth charges!"

Stoker Becker dug his neighbour in the ribs. The latter answered with indifference:

"Well, it didn't do us any harm, and that's the main thing."

"Shall we soon be going home?" whispered the younger man.

"If we have good luck and can fire the last three torpedoes to-day, then we shall make for home straight away."

Pause.

"And if we have bad luck, then we stop out here for ever."

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The other sighed heavily. Suddenly he felt as though the immense weight of water pressing on the vessel must certainly crush it. He wanted to make some reply, but he could not. His eyelids became heavy as lead. His throat began to rattle. His fingers clutched convulsively, and he fell forward without a sound. Hennig caught him before his head could strike one of the sharp corners, and lifted him up. The engineer jumped up at once and turned on the oxygen apparatus. It was just five o'clock.

They laid Becker on the floor, wiped the froth from his lips and applied artificial respiration. His breath began to come again in gasps. The stimulating oxygen flowed into his lungs and eased his breathing. At last he opened his eyes. The other stoker brought him a bowl of coffee. He drank greedily, and became quite cheerful again.

Without, a vague rumbling sound was heard. And then silence once more, the silence of the grave.

The four men spoke no word. Their minds were turned inwards, each following his own train of thought. Only with a great effort could they keep awake. This accursed stillness. It was as though the silence would strangle every living thing. Again the sea roared somewhere far above them.

" Breakers," said the Artificer. The engineer got up, rubbed his knees, glanced at the compass, regulated the water-level, picked up the log-book and began turning over its pages.

" Tenth of October, 1918. Forenoon.

" Sea calm. Cruising in St. George's Channel. Torpedoed 5,000-ton steamship. Dived to escape destroyer. Twenty-two depth charges. A convoy sighted in the afternoon. Unable to get within range. Night cruising. Bright, starlit night. Nothing sighted.

" Eleventh of October, 1918 ; four a.m.

" Clear, bright night.

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" Wind velocity, two degrees Beaufort.

" Position : eighty miles South of Calf of Man."

Thus, in abrupt nautical fashion, were important facts recorded. Just the main essentials set down in concentrated form. Dull and meaningless to the uninitiated. But gripping and thrilling to the submarine-man ; for him, death in a hundred different forms leaped out from those few lines. Tense hours of waiting. The brevity of " Nothing sighted " meant long days and nights of cruising over the empty spaces of the sea, exhausting watch on the bridge, the strain of extra duty below, the battle against wind and weather, the dumb struggle with the ungovernable power of the ocean. Between whiles, a few hours for recuperation on deck. Sunshine. Clouds in the dark blue sky. A streak of land in the distance. Then only the sea and sky once more. Not a ship, not a mast, not a trail of smoke. Breeze springing up. Rough sea. Rain squalls. Heavy seas. Wind velocity : eight degrees. Storm abating. And all the time, hour after hour, the hope of eventual success ; and when twilight fell, extinguishing this hope, a new hope was born of the night. Tests of patience, presence of mind, the power of swift decision. Boundless trust in the mechanical perfection of the vessel. Unimaginably hard work for the technical staff. At every post coolness and calm fulfilment of duty ; no mistakes, no oversights. There in the log were written the two words that embraced all this : " Nothing sighted."

Musing, he laid the book aside.

When would they go out for the last time ?

Suddenly they started out of their doze.

From afar the thunder of an explosion sent out its waves, striking with accumulated force against the steel walls of the submarine and booming through all compartments.

" Good morning ! " said Hennig, quite cheerful all at

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once. That must be another U-boat already at work, he thought—or were the English giving them an early morning greeting of depth charges ?

They listened tensely for any sound from above. But nothing stirred. The silence thrust them slowly back into the perilous state of semi-consciousness.

The engineer wrote in the log-book :

" Six-ten a.m. Distant explosion aft."

At last half-past six came.

The officer in command of U-boat 241, Lieutenant-Commander Volker, started out of his sleep and gazed with astonishment into the face of his servant.

" Six-thirty," announced the servant, putting the Commanding Officer's oilskins in readiness by his bunk.

In the compartments next to the cabin the officer of the watch called out :

" Hands to diving stations."

Lights were switched on, dead-lights unscrewed.

" Hands to diving stations " re-echoed the order through the vessel. Heavy with sleep, the crew climbed out of their bunks. They stretched their limbs. A muttered curse from Schlager, who had barked his shin, raised a general laugh. Friedrichsen, still half-asleep, collided with the coxswain. From the control station came a babel of voices. All was bustle and activity in the vessel that but a few moments before had been plunged in sepulchral silence.

" What's up ? "—" Nothing ! "—" Going to the surface ! "—" At it again now ! "—" Where's Rossler ? "—" Here I am, you fool. Haven't you had enough sleep ? "

" Shut up ! . . . Devil take you ! . . ."

" Good morning, men ! " from the Commanding Officer.

" Good morning, sir ! "

Six-forty. The Commanding Officer entered the control station. A bright light fell on the grave coun-

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tenance, typical of a naval officer. He glanced at the instrument board. The water-level, the manometer, the compass.

"Crew at diving stations. Engines ready!" reported the engineer.

"Thank you."

A glance at the log. A few questions. Then the day's work began.

"Blow the regulating tank!"

The order was complied with, and the pumps began. Pushing, hissing, coughing, in two or three minutes they had expelled the water in the regulating tank. As the noise of the pumps began to subside, a voice reported:

"Regulating tank blown!"

The needle of the manometer trembled hesitantly. The expulsion of more than nine tons of water that held the vessel firmly down on the sea-floor had sufficed to set her free.

"Both engines dead slow ahead!"

"Course 220 degrees!"

The electro-motors started into motion. A few grating sounds, the muffled churning of the screws, and U. 241 glided away over the sea-bed. Then, under a sudden impulse, she began to rise swiftly.

The depth-gauge showed 115 feet, 110, 100, 85, 70, 60.

"Stay at sixty-five feet!"

That applied to the men at the hydroplane wheels. The order was executed with precision, and the horizontal rudders sent the submarine downward. Sixty feet, sixty-three, sixty-five.

The Commanding Officer and the coxswain were now standing in the conning-tower. It was cold and damp and cheerless here at first. There was no warmth or life in the compartment yet. Above the gentle throb of the engines the murmur of the waves and the roar of the breakers already sounded somewhat closer.

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More brief orders to the control station and the officer of the watch.

"Stop the engines!"

Noiselessly the vessel glided through the water, still dark even at sixty-five feet below the surface.

Within all was silent. Everyone was straining his ears to catch sounds from above.

The helmsman was listening-in on the submarine hydrophone.

Everything was quiet.

"All in order, coxswain?"

"Yes."

"Good; then right away!"

"Both engines slow speed ahead!"

The engines started up again, and U. 241 quivered into swifter motion. Then more orders.

"To the surface!"

Final moments of tension in the vessel. The men of the deep stood ready at levers, wheels, ventilators, voice-pipes, instruments and engines.

Voice-pipes whistled. Orders were repeated with military brevity, in the utmost economy of words.

The horizontal rudder rattled. The vessel mounted swiftly.

Fifty feet, forty-five, forty.

Air under pressure hissed into the diving-tanks. U. 241 strove higher.

At last conning-tower and bows broke the surface of the sea.

The conning-tower hatch flew open.

Leaden light and cold, fog-laden air struck down on the men of the watch as they clambered out. The swift passage from the atmosphere of the submarine into the raw sea air gave each a brief stab in the lungs. Leading-seaman Friedrichsen pressed his hand hard against the left side of his chest and then drew a long, deep breath.

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That was how he found it easiest to overcome the effects of the change of atmosphere. Boatswain Scholz and Sub-lieutenant Graf rapidly searched the surrounding sea. Low banks of morning mist still lay on the grey waters. Like a gigantic coffin the Welsh coast rose out of the fog aft of the submarine. To the right, the confused outline of Bardsey Island emerged above light streaks of mist.

"The county of Carnarvon," said Graf, pointing to the fast disappearing land. "Somewhere behind there they have a concentration camp for German submarinemen."

The Commanding Officer came on deck. U. 241 headed at high speed out of Cardigan Bay and into St. George's Channel, sure of being able to use her last torpedoes.

THE SPRINGS OF TREACHERY

A private sitting-room in the Rheingold Hotel, on the Potsdamerstrasse in Berlin. A secret conference of internationalists and enemies of their country. The faces of pacifists. Round, weak, well-nourished. Many Jews among them. Representatives of the revolutionary parties, the left-wing Radical organisations, the free-thinking *Monistenbund*, the revolutionary youth movement; intellectuals of the "New Fatherland League." Among them Civil Servants from the Departments of State and leading members of the patriotic societies.

"We must make things move more quickly.—The general situation is remarkably favourable.—The collapse of the Central Powers.—The retreat on the Western front."

There is a cynical ring in every phrase:

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" The people are on the brink of exhaustion.—Their enfeebled minds are ripe to receive revolutionary ideas without resistance.—The deserters' organisation is working marvellously.—But the Pan-Germans are getting active, too.—There are Radicals in the Naval Command.—Admiral Scheer's programme must never be carried out.—The latest submarine inventions will annihilate England.—The submarine war must be brought to an end.—Ludendorff must be overthrown.—That still remains for the Kaiser to do.—Then it will be his turn."

The pampered faces are beaming. Statistics are read out. The results of the munition workers' strike tabulated: hundreds of thousands fewer shells of all sorts for the German front. Without them all valour is in vain. Not one of the pacifists gives a thought to the German soldiers fallen for lack of these very munitions.

Fresh instructions are issued for the campaign. Unexpected sums of money are available. Roubles, francs and pounds pour in.

The monstrous betrayal of the German nation is approaching its final act. . . .

THE ELEVENTH HOUR

In a single month 500,000 tons of shipping have been sent to the bottom.

The seriousness of the general situation as regards the war and the successful activity of the Naval Command formed in the middle of 1918 under Admiral Scheer have at last forced through a submarine building programme on a grand scale.

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The Scheer programme !

At the eleventh hour orders are given for the three hundred and eighty U-boats demanded. The shipyards commence work under a systematic building programme at the beginning of October.

Forty submarines a month is the minimum.

On the slips at Kiel, Hamburg and Bremen they grow before one's eyes.

Submarine cruisers of the most modern design are on the stocks. Systematic building by series. Twelve are approaching completion. Twelve have passed their trials with magnificent success.

A triumph of German engineering skill.

Angular shapes. Workmanship of minute exactitude. High-grade materials. Armour plating of nickel steel. Unsplinterable quartz glass. Fire-proof insulating material.

Two three-thousand horse-power Diesel engines.

Speed : twenty knots.

Time required for diving : forty seconds.

Four six-inch quick-firing guns.

Carrying twenty torpedoes. The latest terrible torpedoes which leave no tell-tale trail of bubbles behind them ; which speed invisibly towards their prey.

Britain, beware !

* * * * *

The U-Boat School at Kiel furnished the crews to man the new vessels.

Already the School counted several thousand men. The finest human material. Most of them volunteers.

Officers taking special courses were accommodated on the passenger steamer *Meteor*—naval officers, ensigns, engineers, cadets. Here the latest inventions were tested under war conditions. Inventions which completely set at nought the British defences.

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The men of the U-Boat School were put through a gruelling training. They had scarcely a free moment all day long. And at night the wheels, levers, ventilators, divisions of latitude and longitude, pressure gauges, flags and Morse signals whirled in a mad dance through their heads.

They were turned into men who could keep their presence of mind, whatever situation might arise. Men who could make the right decision at lightning speed, though body and nerves were strained to breaking-point. No hesitation, but unquestioning execution of orders, precision and exactitude in all things.

The officer-pupils had the hardest time. Their instructors were U-boat captains of long experience.

"You are making a southerly course in your submarine in pitch darkness. Suddenly destroyers appear ahead. What do you do?"

The man to whom this question is put reflects.

"Enough!" says the instructor. "Your vessel is rammed. You have negligently exposed the lives of your men!"

"Engineer Stecher! The vessel settles down by the stern when diving. What do you do?"

There is a pause.

"All right. No need for you to give any more orders. Your vessel has sunk to the bottom!"

Then he turns to the whole class.

"Gentlemen! Lightning decisions. These things are a matter of seconds!"

So much for theory. Then comes practice. They are worked to the very limit of their capacity. Nerves strained to the utmost. Repetition, and again repetition. Until perfect precision is attained. Exercises by day. Exercises by night. Sleep. An alarm call. Sleep again. Thus is the U-boat-man created.

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THE KAISER VISITS THE U-BOAT SCHOOL AT KIEL

The Kaiser is on his way to Kiel.

All is activity aboard the warships lying there. It is a surprise visit. The orders of the day have to be altered :

" All men change into number one dress : Black shoes, blue trousers, blue shirt, great-coat."

The preliminary inspections are over. The crews take up parade stations. Shoulder to shoulder they stand at the rail. The Imperial yacht appears. White as snow. On the upper deck is the Kaiser in the uniform of an Admiral of the Fleet.

The Imperial salute booms out. The yacht speeds past towards the submarine harbour.

The *Meteor* lies moored at the quay.

Alongside her, twenty-six submarines in extended line.

The U-boat crews stand in double ranks on deck.

The officer-pupils of the U-Boat School have assembled on shore.

The band strikes up.

Cloaks blowing in the breeze, gleaming buttons. Decorations.

The Kaiser walks down the line. He looks closely at every one of the future U-boat officers. His countenance is grave.

He puts questions. Nods, satisfied. Then he inspects two of the vessels. He chats affably with the men.

" Do you like submarine service ? "

" Yes, Your Majesty."

" How old are you ? "

" Twenty, Your Majesty."

Then the Kaiser mounts briskly with his suite to the bridge of the *Meteor*.

He watches with interest as the submarines put out to sea.

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Then the base-ship herself puts off, the Imperial Standard fluttering from her maintop.

The Eckernförder Bay presents a strange scene.

Passenger steamers, freighters, tugs, trawlers, mine-sweepers, torpedo-boats and light cruisers form themselves into a convoy at whose head sails the *Meteor*. War exercises begin. The convoy starts to move. Zig-zags. Periscopes. Submerged U-boats.

Individual attacks by the submarines meet with success. The *Meteor* is torpedoed. Other steamers are hit, too.

One submarine allows the convoy to sail over her, pops her periscope up in the middle of the herd, and torpedoes two ships at the same time without being seen.

The Kaiser is satisfied. He has his praise conveyed to the Commanding Officer by flag signals.

While the *Meteor* is sailing back in the afternoon he delivers an address to her officers :

" The submarine arm shows us the imperishable spirit of German might and the valour of German men. I am pleased to see here to-day many of my submarine commanders, and I should therefore like to say now that I anticipate a telling effect from the doubling of our submarine fleet which has just begun, with a consequent favourable reaction upon the course of the war. I shall do my utmost to give my submarine-men what they need for the struggle. The new vessels are in every respect a unique weapon. May they therefore contribute towards the final victory.

" Forward, captains of the submarines ! "

The officers are inspired. They stand about in groups talking without restraint. Individual officers are summoned to the Imperial presence. Outside, the U-boat captains who are Knights of the Order of Merit are standing before His Majesty. Among these senior officers the Kaiser appears as though transfigured. He is

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personally acquainted with almost every one of them, and astonishingly well informed as to their achievements.

He expresses his appreciation. Compares them with the Paladins of earlier Emperors. He spurs each man on to fresh deeds. German will and energy pass from him like sparks to fire their ardour. Victory must come.

Meanwhile the *Meteor* has moored. The Imperial Standard is hauled down. The Kaiser goes ashore.

An hour later the special train is carrying him back to Berlin.

Weary and unstrung, he sinks again into hopeless despair.

THE WORK OF THE MINE-SWEEPERS

From Skagerrack to the Dogger Bank, and from there right down to the Dutch island of Texel, the North Sea was blocked by British minefields that extended almost to the West Frisian Islands, off Borkum, Juist, Norderney, round Heligoland, off the North Frisian Islands, and along the coast of Jutland as far as Hanstholm.

In this zone of the North Sea alone nearly eighty thousand mines were lurking to bring destruction to German submarines and warships. Each of these eighty thousand contained four hundredweights of iron and explosives: sixteen thousand tons of death-dealing material.

The tenacious, inglorious, but perilous work of the mine-sweepers kept the German Bight free of mines from the Roter Sand lighthouse as far North as the Horns Riff. They cleared a path for special expeditions through the vast mine zone, embarrassed the movements of the enemy, and swept away whole minefields within the blockaded area.

At the first glow of dawn on the sixteenth of October,

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1918, a squadron consisting of four German battleships, weighed anchor and steamed slowly in formation towards a little cloud of smoke hanging on the north-western horizon, and beneath which a swarm of mine-sweepers could presently be perceived.

The warships, which had been told off to protect the mine-sweepers, had been lying some 135 miles west of Heligoland, and though they had been cruising in these waters since the fourteenth of October, not a single British vessel had put in an appearance.

The four mighty battleships steamed majestically to and fro in line ahead formation, while the mine-sweepers combed the sea in all directions.

The guns of the warships pointed menacingly over the sea. But the gun crews, the men at the control positions and the " spotting " parties at their posts in the foretop and maintop scanned the clear horizon in vain.

The British did not come.

In the dull routine of this monotonous patrol duty the discussions of political questions which had begun in September were slowly but surely diminishing vigilance at every naval patrol base.

Like slow poison Wilson's Fourteen Points were eating away the foundations of German discipline.

THE TEMPER OF THE MEN

" First duty watch to their posts ! "

The monotonous summons of the battery sentry rang through the secondary armament control positions of the battleship *Thüringen*.

The bulk-head door of the No. 3 casemate amidships closed with a bang, and the ten or a dozen seamen and stokers off duty were left alone once more.

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" When will this bloody hanging about be over ? " said one of the stokers.

" Another four hours' watch ! " " Miserable business ! "

" Draw the fires ! " " Finish with it once and for all ! "

Thus they muttered among themselves. None of them got up ; they all remained obstinately sitting in their places. Through the broadside casemates their comrades were hurrying to take up their positions for the watch.

The roll of the ship flung open the port bulk-head door. Three or four men rose to their feet. The petty-officer of the watch came through the bulk-head again.

" Get up there ! First war watch to their posts ! " he shouted at the group. They scrambled reluctantly to their feet.

" Take your time, boys ! " " Bloody misery ! " " Getting choked with smoke down in the stoke-hold ! " he heard them muttering. But the petty-officer refused to pander to them.

" Come along there ; out of it ! What's the use of talking like that ? "

With their hands in their pockets and their caps pulled down over their eyes, they slouched slowly past him.

The ammunition party in the after gun-turret had made themselves thoroughly comfortable. Three men were enjoying a game of *skat*, two others had dozed off, and the petty-officer was pursuing his private studies in algebra.

In the gun-turret above them things were more lively. The armoured compartment there had been degraded into a place of assembly for political debates. The turret captain did not regard it as his duty to put an end to this state of affairs. The turret officer had received no

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orders to that effect. "Bull-face," an elderly leading-seaman so dubbed on account of his facial expression, was holding forth.

"The war has lasted long enough, and the new Government will give us peace. Wilson's offer of peace does prove that the enemy has honourable intentions."

"But we could have had it in 1915, when our Emperor offered peace to the enemy."

Bull-face ignored the interruption and went on.

"The Labour leaders, Ebert and Scheidemann, who are in the new Government, have forced through the new electoral law as well as many other things."

"Then we shall win the war all right," said Leading-seaman Uhse sarcastically.

That made Bull-face lose the thread of his argument.

"It doesn't matter whether we win the war or not. Either way we get nothing out of it. The main thing is to have peace," he bawled at Uhse.

"Quietly, quietly, gentlemen!" admonished the turret captain. A faint reflected light played on the bright metal parts of the gun. Apparently the ship was veering. Bull-face continued his harangue.

"We want peace. Peace without annexations. Peace by negotiation. And that's what the enemy wants, too."

"You're a sweet angel of peace," murmured someone slyly. The turret captain moved closer to Bull-face and asked:

"How do you know that the Allies are prepared to conclude peace by negotiation?"

Bull-face stopped, confused; and then stammered:

"It was in the papers. Wilson's Fourteen Points are decisive."

The turret captain stood up and said:

"Are you a relative of Wilson's? You know nothing about the fellow. Mind you're not disappointed, Wilson is not the same thing as France."

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With this he turned on his heel and went down into the working chamber.

Bull-face had gone quite pale and gazed nonplussed after his superior officer. For a few moments there was silence in the turret, and then he continued his speech.

"It's all very well for him to talk, with his fat screw. But we can't even go ashore on our tanner a day."

"That's got nothing to do with Wilson's Fourteen Points," someone interrupted. The telegraphist thrust the head-'phones away from his ear, the better to follow this argument.

"This war is absolutely senseless. What good has it done us? Millions of dead and wounded. People starving. Jam made out of swedes. Rotten substitute for soap. A stop must be put to it, one way or another. Or perhaps you think the other nations aren't having such a bad time of it as we are?"

"I'd have nothing against that if it came from a soldier on the Western front. But coming from one of us, to say nothing of you, Bull-face . . ." answered Uhse.

"Then why don't you go to the Western front yourself?"

"All in good time. I'm not the Emperor of Germany. But if you want to know, my transfer to the submarine training-ship is in the ship's office at this very moment."

"Congratulations!" cried his comrades, all shaking hands with Uhse. But Bull-face said cuttingly:

"Then you'll be just in time to die a hero's death."

"I'm not worrying about that. I'm a sailor."

At this moment the gunnery officer's messenger put his head through the hatch from the upper-deck.

"What's the matter with you here? The control station has been calling turret 'Dora' * for the last five minutes without getting any reply."

* In the German Navy, turrets were named alphabetically, *e.g.*, Albert, Bertha, Cæsar, Dora, to facilitate transmission of orders and signals.

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The telegraphist quickly thrust the head-'phones over his ears and made great play of adjusting the mouth-piece. The operator was rattling and shouting and cursing in the control station.

"Hello!" he answered at last. "Turret Dora speaking."

Then he called out aloud to his companions:

"Guns ready for director-control!"

Such was the state of affairs in almost all the big ships now.

Anyone who had known the earlier devotion to duty noticed at once how things had altered. No one worried any longer about keeping a look-out, formerly so assiduously observed as vital to the safety of the ships. Every duty was carried out now merely as a matter of form. The men of the watch sat about in groups at their action stations and talked politics. Such was the inevitable consequence of the Fleet Order providing for the "alleviation of active service duties."

Parliament, Wilson, the Fourteen Points. The new Government. The reply to Wilson. Peace. Peace. Peace.

On this limed twig the sailors, stokers, petty-officers and warrant officers of the Imperial Fleet straightway stuck fast.

The split was not vertical, with officers on one side and men on the other, but cut horizontally through the Fleet. It ran through all ranks, and more than one Persius * was to be found among the officers.

Six weeks earlier, when someone let fall the words "Peace at any price," during an evening argument among the men, it had still been possible for some senior leading-seaman to seize the crazy fellow by the scruff of

* The allusion is to Captain L. Persius, a retired officer of radical views who contributed to the German Press.

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the neck and fling him into the hammock chest, with the full approval of his comrades. But now the subject was discussed without a single voice being raised in opposition.

In vain those still true to their duty waited for some energetic action from above, or for the intervention of the British.

An encounter with the enemy would have swept the whole humbug away at a single stroke.

But the British Admiralty did not repeat the advance of August, 1918. Their spies had told them of the successful ferment of Bolshevism in the German Fleet and at the naval bases.

They were not going to spoil things by interfering, despite the agitation that had been going on for months among the British public in favour of some vigorous action on the part of the Grand Fleet.

The mine-sweepers had hove to, and lay in pairs alongside one another. The sweeping gear had been shipped.

Cables were still being hauled here and there. The buoys were being drawn in. One or two more shots, aimed at floating mines, were fired from the mine-sweepers No. 32 and No. 34, which were operating some little distance from the rest.

On the leading vessel the signal was run up :

" Work finished ! Return to base ! "

In a long line, at high speed, the two flotillas steamed harbourwards. It was a long way and they were in a hurry.

Swiftly cruising, the eighteen vessels passed the battle squadron, which was still headed in the opposite direction.

A few brief greetings from ship to ship. A few Morse signals. Captain to Captain. Then they were gone on their way.

At last the leading ship sent out a flag signal. Swift as

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the wind it leapt from ship to ship. All turned at the same moment sixteen points to port and began to cruise homeward. The course taken by the mine-sweepers was now marked only by a few transient wisps of smoke on the horizon.

LIEUTENANT RÜGER

Four o'clock in the afternoon.

Monotonously the bosun's whistle shrilled through the cold, damp casemates of the battleship *Nassau*; and monotonously the summons sounded through the ship:

"Second war watch to their stations."

The change of watch was speedily effected.

The ratings released from duty made for the casemates amidships, the petty-officers went down to their quarters between decks, and the warrant-officers and commissioned officers disappeared aft into their cabins and ward-rooms.

Lieutenant Rüger left his action station and strode aft, bowing his head and shoulders as he passed through the low-roofed casemates.

The floor was quivering from the vibration of the engines. The ship was pitching heavily and rolling slowly from starboard to port. Waves were pounding against the gun-ports, and water poured in bucketfuls into the battery positions, splashing and swishing as the roll of the vessel sent it swilling from side to side, gurgling as it flowed back through the scuppers into the sea.

Rüger strode rapidly past the door of the ward-room towards his own cabin.

For the first time in all the long years he had served aboard ship he realised how cramped and bare—simple almost to the point of meanness—an officer's cabin was. Hardly six square yards of floor-space. A little table, a

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cupboard, a chair, and his bunk. Everything of Spartan simplicity. But almost painfully clean, with its light-coloured paint. The elegant pictures had been removed from the walls and the files and writing things from the table. Everything was stowed away, so that a few brief movements would suffice to comply with the order to "clear ship."

He flung himself wearily into his chair, but even when he sat down his legs still ached.

Four hours off duty. Four hours on active service watch. Day and night the same mechanical alternation, always accompanied by the unrest of a ship at sea and only now and then broken by a half-hour's gun-cleaning during the daytime. Yet he could not bear to sit long in his cabin, and after a little while he got up and went to the ward-room.

When, at five o'clock, the squadron sighted the Outer Jade light-ship Lieutenant Rüger was standing on the quarter-deck admiring the noble spectacle of a sunset at sea. Times without number he had beheld the same phenomenon, but this time he stood fascinated by the strange magnificence of the evening sky.

The sun was just disappearing behind a dark bank of cloud on the western horizon. Suddenly a thin, glowing streak shot out over the summits of the clouds now piled up like mountains, and framed the strange picture with a rim of molten gold. To right and left the golden ray was dissipated in masses of red and violet light. The cloud-bank, darker and more menacing by contrast, lent an aspect of forbidding gloom to the whole spectacle.

But, lo! The glittering band that encircled the midmost peak of cloud assumed the clear, distinct form of a gigantic crown; and past its glowing points moved rays of fainter light, like the spears of a marching army.

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And where the golden band ran on to either side he seemed to see the shapes of many smaller crowns.

Then all at once a purple flame burst through the blue-black cloud-bank to the left and ran, gathering volume as it went, along the bottom of the magnificent picture.

Red light leapt up like tongues of fire.

Rüger clutched at his heart in horror.

The huge crown melted away in the conflagration, and with it were consumed all the lesser crowns.

Sky and water were suffused with a blood-red glow.

Lifted out of himself, he watched in breathless fascination as this natural spectacle unfolded itself. His strong hands gripped the chains of the guard-rail. The feeling of something sinister and weird swept over him like a premonition of approaching disaster.

For a long time he stood there, staring out into the grey and empty space. Wildly the waves of the North Sea raged and seethed around the stern of the vessel.

Fainter and fainter grew the sunset glow. At last it was extinguished altogether.

Then he turned to the companion and went down into the ship.

At seven o'clock the little squadron passed the Outer Jade light-ship.

The men on war watch were dismissed.

Change of course.

Signal from the head of the column : Full speed.

The horizon drew closer. The first pale stars of evening appeared in the sky. Then swift darkness descended. The gate and boom were opened, and one after another the four ships passed through.

All around the sea was inky black.

Shrill whistles across the deck. Lights from Schillig signal station flashing out to starboard. Then Morse messages from ship to ship.

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Orders rang out.

The anchorage was reached. With a mighty rumbling the seven-ton anchors rattled down into the deep. At the same instant the engines were reversed, and the huge vessels lay at anchor in Schillig roadstead.

REVOLUTIONARY PROPAGANDA IN THE THIRD BATTLE SQUADRON

An overcast sky above the North Sea and the Jade. Night. Driven from the north-west, the waves ran high, pounding with tremendous force against the vessels of the Third Battle Squadron which rode at anchor in the outpost zone. The huge iron colossi were pitching heavily in the violence of the unchained elements.

The billows as they rose were whipped by the nor'-wester, and swept in squalls of rain over the decks.

Aboard the battleship of the *König* class, which lay closest to the mine-field, a figure could be seen standing in the lee of the forward turret, looking across intently at the dark shape of the neighbouring vessel. There was something weird and sinister in the spattering of the squalls against the gun-turret, something spectral in the white foam-caps riding the dark waves in ghostly cavalcade.

The figure in the shelter of the turret paced restlessly to and fro and scanned the dark waters incessantly.

" Silence in the ship " had long since sounded below, but still the tender had not arrived.

The stoker began to grow impatient, and was just about to go down the hatchway into the casemate when two lights, red and green, suddenly emerged from out of the darkness. Then the lights were swallowed again by the night or hidden by a mounting wave ; but a moment

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later they began to leap closer and closer through the darkness.

Just as the man was proceeding slowly to the middle-deck came the sharp shrill of a whistle, and the officer of the watch called out :

" Middle-deck port squad ! Tender coming alongside ! "

In the casemates below the men rose grumbling from their mattresses. Two or three ratings climbed up the companion, stood dubiously on the middle-deck and then began to grope their way along it. Their eyes were still unaccustomed to the darkness.

" Come along there ; look sharp ! " yelled the petty-officer to the men still below. More steps on the companion ; and the squad was on deck.

White wave-caps, heaving billows, the tender's side-lights, and scudding clouds above.

A searchlight from the derrick illuminated the place amidships where the steamer was to come alongside.

It was a difficult manœuvre in such heavy seas.

At last she lay alongside. Between the two vessels the angry waters foamed up six feet into the air.

Still hidden by the turret, the stoker hovered waiting at the guard-rail.

The fenders slung over the side creaked and groaned.

The officer, the boatswain and the ratings of the watch were all busily engaged ; and the exchange of mail-bags was swiftly effected.

While two men returning from leave were being helped on board, someone on the after deck of the steamer held up a little package. The stoker leant over the rail, seized it unobserved, and stuffed it under his shirt.

Surreptitiously he crept away, disappeared down the nearest hatch, ran forward under the rows of hammocks, and dived into the hatch leading to the target store-room.

In the dimly lit gangway he saw a notice in black

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lettering on a white ground: "No admittance after 8 p.m."

This was the door to the store-room. He crouched down and listened, but could hear nothing. Taking the packet out of his shirt, he knocked three times on the door. It opened silently to his summons. He thrust aside the tarpaulin curtains and entered the dark compartment.

Only after the door had closed behind him was the electric light switched on.

Through clouds of tobacco smoke could be seen the faces of stokers and seamen.

Impatiently they snatched the packet from his grasp, and tore off its wrapping. Broadsheets and pamphlets fluttered to the ground; hands trembling from excitement clutched at them as they fell.

There was a babel of voices, some of them already hoarse from much speaking.

Noise filled the compartment.

"This is the goods!"—"To the workers of Germany!"—"An end to this wholesale butchery!"—"World revolution!"—"Look here what Haase's been saying in the Reichstag! It's great!"—"And Cohn, too! Brilliant!"—"Better peace without monarchy than monarchy with war," he said.—"Who said?"—"Why, Cohn. Here it is: Dr. Cohn, Independent."

"Quiet, comrades!"

An elderly stoker knocked on a tin can, and then began to speak.

"Comrades! I have here the latest broadsheet, dated the fifth of October, 1918, issued by the leaders of the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany. In order to strengthen and confirm our revolutionary fighting spirit, I propose to read this document out. Afterwards we can discuss it."

He took a deep breath and then began to read:

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"To the workers of Germany! The militarist system has received a blow from which it will never recover. Imperialism has broken down. The spirit of democracy and Socialism is marching onward to victory.

"The German Government has proposed an armistice and has accepted the programme put forward by the President of the United States as a basis for a negotiated peace. This step was decided upon before the new Government came to the helm.

"This offer meets half-way our own unceasing efforts for peace. The Independent Social Democratic Party has from the beginning foreseen the catastrophe which Imperialism must inevitably bring about. The Party has remained true to the principles of democracy and Socialism. Alone among the political parties it voted against the Treaties of Brest-Litovsk and Bucharest, which even the other parties do not now dare to defend."

Pause. The comrades puffed away at their pipes and cigarettes.

"True to our convictions as International Socialists, we have at every stage of the war opposed the use of force against the people of any nation. This gives us the moral right to reject also every attempt at the oppression of the German people."

"'Moral right' is good," said one of the men.

"All other parties have been compelled by the iron hand of circumstance to revise the aims for which the war is being fought. They will be forced to change their attitude again, as they have already done in the past. Only the Independent Social Democratic Party need change no jot in its programme of peace. The Memorandum drawn up by it at Stockholm in June, 1917, which was suppressed at that time by the Censor and which was attacked by the other parties, including the Social Democratic Party, now comes into force.

"The policy of the Social Democratic Party, of

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Scheidemann and Ebert, of David and Lensch, no less than that of the ruling classes, has collapsed. The Social Democratic Party was impotent and devoid of influence so long as the fortunes of war favoured the Imperialists, despite—or rather because of—the fact that the party supported the war policy of every capitalist government and voted for war credits. Throughout all the long years of the war the Social Democratic Party has achieved nothing for peace, for freedom, or for the protection of the working men and women against their exploiters."

"But I thought Scheidemann and Ebert were Social Democrats," interjected one of the stokers.

"It says that this broadsheet is issued by the Independents."

"Isn't that the same thing?"

"Time for discussion afterwards!"

"At the moment when bourgeois society was crumbling to pieces, several Social Democrats, like Scheidemann and Bauer, were made Ministers. Thus the Social Democrats were officially stamped as Socialists supporting the Government.

"The Social Democratic Party was called upon to join the Government in order that it might bolster up bourgeois society after the collapse of Imperialism. The party accepted the task of organising 'the national defence' and safeguarding bourgeois 'order.' It broke faith with the International Congresses which had demanded that Social Democracy should take advantage of the catastrophe of the world war to set up the Socialist system in place of the capitalist!"

The listening men looked at one another in wonderment.

"The programme which the Social Democratic Party put forward as a condition for entry into the Government was so modest that even certain bourgeois newspapers thought it did not go far enough. There was no claim for

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an amnesty for political offences, nor even for the ' raising of the State of Siege ' ; and the programme contained no Socialist demand of any sort. And though the Social Democratic Party declared that its programme represented a minimum from which nothing could be abated, it yet gave way on several points to the bourgeois parties and the Government.

" Such was the weakness of the Social Democratic Party, even at the time it entered the Government. Even a progressive bourgeois Government would forthwith have realised the following demands :

" ' Immediate evacuation of those territories of the former Russian Empire, Finland, the Baltic Provinces, Poland, the Ukraine, Rumania and Bulgaria now occupied by German troops.' "

" But why do that ? " was the question that escaped the lips of one of the younger sailors.

" Shut up, you fool ! "

" ' Revision on democratic lines of the Treaties already concluded.

" ' Amnesty for all civilians, soldiers and sailors sentenced for political offences. Release of all persons imprisoned for so-called treasonable acts arising out of strikes. Quashing of criminal proceedings pending against political offenders. Immediate release of all men conscripted to the army on political grounds. Erasure of all political black marks from military and police records. Abolition of preventive detention and the release of all interned persons.

" ' Raising of the State of Siege. Right of combination and assembly. Freedom of the Press. Removal of all restrictions on the issue of new journals. Strict enforcement of the secrecy of the post. Abolition of both open and secret postal censorship, which is in flagrant violation even of existing laws. Introduction of proportional representation of the electorate.' "

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"Proportional!" That brought a grin to the faces of the seamen. A "portion" must surely refer to something to eat.

"'Enfranchisement of women. Extension of equal, universal and direct franchise, by secret ballot, to all the Federal States, by Act of the Imperial Parliament. Repeal of the Conscription of Labour law. Re-enforcement and extension of the regulations for the protection of women and children. Introduction of the eight-hours' day.'"

"Eight-hours' day: that sounds almost like the name of some religious holiday," murmured Leading-seaman Blank to himself.

"'Immediate modification of the Constitution on the following points:

"'Treaties to be valid only after ratification by the elected representatives of the people. Without such ratification war cannot be declared, nor peace concluded. Any Minister may be dismissed his office at the demand of a majority of the elected representatives of the people.'

"We, as International Socialists, put forward much more radical demands than these. Our aim is a Socialist Republic. It alone can release the world from the desolation of war."

At the words, "Socialist Republic," the speaker had risen to his feet.

"Far-reaching revolutionary movements are taking place in all States. The face of the world is being changed beyond recognition. But things are turning out very differently from the cocksure prophecies of the Cunows and Lensches, the Davids and the Renners."

He resumed his seat.

"To take a leading part in this process of change is the historic mission of the international proletariat. Enthusiasm, self-sacrifice and resolute determination are demanded for the fulfilment of this task. The methods of

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those Socialists who co-operate with the Government can lead only to the hampering of the independent activity of the working class and the strengthening of bourgeois society.

"Nor can the unity of the proletariat be achieved under the banner of the Centre, the Progressive People's Party, or the National Liberals, any more than under that of the Government Socialists.

"Unity beneath the unsullied banner of the Independent Social Democratic Party, of International Socialism, must be the watchword of the German proletariat.

"Only thus can peace be assured, only thus can the future of the proletariat and of humanity be made secure."

Again the speaker rose. His voice was becoming still hoarser. He waved away the tobacco-smoke which his neighbour blew full into his face.

"Up! Unite!"

One or two men sprang to their feet. The habit of military drill was too deeply ingrained in them.

"Close the ranks! The greatest cause of all is at stake! The liberation of mankind!"

He sat down, exhausted. The faces seemed strangely elongated as he looked at them through the smoke and exhalations of some two dozen men.

Still they went on staring at him.

Had he forgotten something?

At last, half asleep, he murmured: "And Germany!"

Then came a thundering crash; someone in the background had gone to sleep and fallen over. The rest sprang up in alarm.

Thereupon the discussion began.

After midnight they stole out of the store-room one by one and sought their hammocks.

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THE BEGINNING OF THE END

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THE STRANGLING OF THE SUBMARINE WAR

Berlin.

The Palace of the Imperial Chancellor.

In the ante-rooms groups of naval officers, generals, statesmen, party politicians, courtiers, journalists.

Tension written on all countenances.

The officers outwardly cool, calm, correct.

The politicians and reporters animated, bustling.

Isolated words flung out from the conversing groups echo in the lofty rooms.

Somewhere three muffled strokes of a clock announce that hour in the afternoon of the nineteenth of October, 1918.

The doors of the historic Bismarck Room are flung open.

The Cabinet meeting, adjourned at half-past one, is about to resume its sitting.

Noiseless steps, whispered conversation. The members of the Cabinet make their appearance.

The Imperial Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor, the Secretaries of State, government officials.

A decision tremendous in its consequences has to be made.

Once again it is the question of unrestricted submarine warfare. Germany is hard pressed, and any means of bringing the enemy to their knees must be acceptable to the Government.

But the Cabinet Ministers of the first Parliamentary Government are under the influence of Wilson's peace offer. They are just ordinary, average men, who are always at the mercy of other people's arguments on this

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point or that. And among them are some who feel for the calamity of other nations, but not for that of their own country.

The Imperial Chancellor, Prince Max of Baden, presides.

He opens the sitting.

Admiral Scheer has not arrived yet.

The faces of the Parliamentarians are beaming. They have taken advantage of the luncheon interval to prepare the decisive stroke against unrestricted submarine warfare.

For this reason three new men have been summoned to join in the deliberations.

The Minister to Copenhagen, Count Brockdorff-Rantzau.

The Minister to The Hague, Rosen.

Ambassador Count Wolff-Metternich.

The policy of catastrophe takes its course. The proposal of the Naval Command, made with a full sense of responsibility, "under all circumstances to maintain unrestricted submarine warfare until an armistice shall have been declared," is opposed by the party agents, who have the insolence to call themselves representatives of the people. In other words, the demands of the naval front are being sabotaged by intriguers at home, by the demagogues of the many.

The Chancellor begins to speak, and the very first sentences that fall from his lips betray that the Prince's attitude has changed once more.

The Cabinet Ministers who only that morning were ready to vote for the Navy's proposal look at one another in astonishment.

There is much talk. The discussion becomes animated.

At last Admiral Scheer, accompanied by his Chief of Staff, enters the Cabinet room.

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For a second or two there is silence. Then the Prince calls upon Ambassador Count Wolff-Metternich to speak.

The Count gives his view:

"... unrestricted submarine warfare is illegal. The Entente will not recognise it as a lawful instrument of war. Therefore it cannot be used as a weapon for bargaining ..."

Imperial Secretary of State Scheidemann nods his approval.

The Count goes on:

"... if we wish to secure the confidence and good will of the enemy in negotiating for peace, then we must begin by sacrificing submarine warfare. It must be our morning-gift to peace. And, of course, without any corresponding concession on the part of the enemy."

Admiral Scheer moves not a muscle. His face remains hard and expressionless. Only his steely eyes seek the other's face.

Then Count Brockdorff-Rantzau speaks. He underlines the arguments of his fellow-diplomat.

Herr Rosen sounds the same note.

The face of Captain von Levetzow, Chief of Staff to the Naval Command, suddenly darkens. Under his high forehead his eyes are like two hard, straight lines merging one into the other, and his pursed lips likewise form a straight line. So these are the Apostles of Peace. These gentlemen appear to have heard nothing about the blockade carried out by the British in defiance of International Law. He has an uneasy feeling that the enemy's cause had all at once found champions here. Then Prince Max of Baden speaks, and declares with a nonchalance that must seem suspicious:

"Since these three experts on foreign affairs feel it their duty to give this opinion, I am not in a position to contradict them. I accept their judgment."

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That means, in other words: "At the command of the President of the United States I will suspend submarine warfare, and swallow every humiliation that may be forced upon the German people."

This is the same Prince Max of Baden who declared in the Reichstag on the fifth of October:

". . . Whatever the result may be, I know that it will find Germany united in unshakeable resolution, either to conclude an honourable peace without self-seeking violation of the rights of others, or to fight to the bitter end a life and death struggle which would be forced upon our people, without any fault of theirs, should the powers at war with us reply to our offer in terms dictated by the desire to annihilate us."

The Foreign Minister, Dr. Solf, who, with the Imperial Secretary of State Scheidemann, voted against the Navy's proposal in the morning, now reads a memorandum which he has prepared for the Note to Wilson; in place of unrestricted submarine warfare, he proposes unconditionally to concede immunity to all passenger vessels.

Then Admiral Scheer rises to his feet. His words ring through the room.

"This formula is intolerable to the naval front. If it is accepted I shall be compelled to bring submarine warfare to a complete standstill. Not for a second time shall I allow the U-boats to enter an utterly hopeless struggle!"

But the Admiral is preaching to deaf ears. Matthias Erzberger is already polishing his spectacles; the experienced tactician of the Centre, who spoke in favour of the Navy proposal that morning, is ready now to face about on this question, as he has done on so many more.

Admiral Scheer goes on speaking. In grave, emphatic words he brings home to the Cabinet the consequences of abandoning submarine warfare.

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" It would mean a free gift to England of hundreds of war vessels and tens of thousands of men whose movements are now paralysed by the mere existence of the submarine menace. The Navy must not cease fighting a single hour sooner than the Army at the front ! "

Then rises the Imperial Secretary of State Erzberger. He vigorously attacks Admiral Scheer's arguments. With the boldness of an active party-manager he criticises the naval expert's exposition. Then he switches over to parliamentary phrase-making.

" An amicable peace—Humanity—Submarine warfare is a violation of International Law ! "

And this is the same Erzberger who, on the fourteenth of September, 1914, wrote to the Minister of War, von Falkenhayn :

" All scruples regarding possible violation of International Law and all humanitarian considerations, though they may have merited appreciation in Berlin drawing-rooms in time of peace, must, in my opinion, be relegated completely to the background now that war is being waged—more especially in view of the methods adopted by our opponents."

Erzberger's *volte-face*, his sudden furious tirade in favour of Wilson's demands, make it easy for the other members of the Cabinet to abandon Admiral Scheer. The fate of the submarine war is sealed.

At eight o'clock the sitting adjourns.

At nine it is resumed.

Dr. Solf submits the following paragraph of the redrafted Note :

" In order to avoid anything that may hinder the work of peace, all officers commanding submarines have been forbidden by the German Government to torpedo passenger vessels under any circumstances."

Once more Admiral Scheer makes his protest. Utters an emphatic warning against setting the interests of

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humanity before those of the nation. Expounds convincingly the arguments of the Navy. Calls upon the Cabinet yet again to stand firm and, for the sake of the hard-pressed Western front, not to abandon submarine warfare.

But what do Scheidemann, Dr. Solf, Erzberger and Gröber care for the hard-pressed Western front? They have now but a single thought: to grasp power for themselves; and to that end they will use any means. All the Admiral's arguments are fruitless.

The Cabinet accepts the draft. The submarine war is strangled. Fate takes its course. The babblers have snatched victory from the heroes.

At one o'clock in the morning Admiral Scheer leaves the Imperial Chancellery. He has not yet abandoned the struggle for the submarines.

Telegram to Ludendorff.

The answer arrives in the early hours of the twentieth of October: the Supreme Army Command and the Naval Command are at one.

The same morning an audience of the Kaiser at the Neues Palais.

Admiral Scheer lays before his Majesty the exchange of telegrams with General Ludendorff. He asks for the convening of the Privy Council.

The Supreme War Lord shall decide.

The Emperor agrees. He approves the Admiral's attitude.

Full of confidence, the Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet drives back to Berlin.

Meanwhile the telegraphs are tapping. Telephonic communications pass between the Imperial Chancellery and the Neues Palais.

Toot, toot, toot! The Emperor's car flashes along the

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Wilhelmstrasse. Officers and other men in uniform spring to attention. The car has passed.

It draws up before the Imperial Chancellery.

The Kaiser alights and goes in to see the Chancellor.

The understanding between them is closer than that between the Kaiser and his Generals and Admirals.

The Emperor cannot resist the Prince's arguments, and gives his assent to the political considerations of the Cabinet. He, too, deserts the submarines.

Admiral Scheer is still in Berlin.

Yet it is for the departmental chief of the Naval Command that the Kaiser sends, charging him to convey the refusal to his superior.

That same night the German reply is transmitted to Wilson.

The following afternoon Admiral Scheer sends a wireless order to all U-boats at sea, commanding them to return home.

It is the twenty-first of October, 1918.

On the same day Liebknecht was released from prison. Tens of thousands of people marched through the streets of Berlin in celebration, carrying red banners and shouting :

" Long live the revolution ! "

" Long live Liebknecht ! "

The Government of Prince Max of Baden quietly withdrew the police.

In the sacred name of the dawning Parliamentary era, every political group must be allowed full freedom of development.

In Russia Lenin had superseded Kerensky, but Germany had learned no lesson from that.

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THE U-BOATS COME HOME

The veiled contours of the hills of the Isle of Man were rapidly swallowed in the twilight of the twenty-first of October, 1918, and soon they were lost to view by the look-out men of a German submarine cruising southward.

The thin smoke-plumes of British patrol vessels drifted away aft, and the pale blue streak on the western horizon sank lower and lower in the sky.

Twilight brooded over the grey waters, conjuring up spectral shapes before the eyes of the U-boat men.

Swiftly the vessel sped towards her field of action. Her crew were cheerful and in high spirits because of the smooth, unhindered progress. There was animation in the narrow compartments. Gramophone music. Laughter. Singing.

One or two of the men were standing on deck behind the conning-tower, and smoking pipes and cigarettes.

Stars flashed out between the clouds that went sailing overhead.

Then sparks began to crackle on the wireless aerials. Through the wires the sound-waves found their way within the vessel.

The operator on duty pricked up his ears. He recognised at once the code which told him that the message came from home.

Ahoy! This must be something out of the ordinary.

"Message from the Chief of the Naval Command."

His pencil raced over the paper.

"To all submarines at sea."

Word followed word of the code message. Almost imperceptibly the practised hand of the writer began to tremble.

He comprehended.

"Orders to return to port!"

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" Prohibition of attacks on merchant shipping ! "

Once more he listened, only half attending, while the senseless message was repeated. This was no bluff. He slammed the door angrily behind him.

An unparalleled yell of anger ran through the vessel. These men who had withstood all the perils of submarine warfare with imperturbable calm now leaped up in uncontrollable rage.

" Those scoundrels in Berlin ! "—" The new Government is responsible for this ! "—" Erzberger ! "—" Wilson ! "—" America ! "

Captain and coxswain stared uncomprehendingly at the fatal slip of paper. Their faces blenched.

" Ordered home ! "

The letters danced like mocking goblins before their eyes. Wrathful mirth rose within their breasts.

" Unmitigated Parliamentary madness ! "

" All our work out here for nothing ! The politicians have put the tin hat on it again ! "

" My God ! It's enough to drive one to despair ! "

Meanwhile the Commanding Officer had given the coxswain the order : " Turn sixteen points."

In the diving control-station, in the Diesel engine-room, in the steering position, through the men's quarters, everywhere the order was passed on. Through the open hatch it was repeated to those on deck.

The look-out men stood motionless from astonishment.

They questioned, but no answer was returned. The dark waters held their peace.

The vessel turned. Course set for home.

All knew it now. They were going back to Germany.

" Is the war over ? "

" Not on your life ! "

" Giving up the war on commerce, the only weapon that can touch Britain ! "

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Even the humblest U-boat sailor could not grasp the meaning of that.

Outside a wind had sprung up, driving high the billows of the Irish Sea. Spray beat into the faces of the look-out men. The hollow whistling of the wind sounded like mockery in their ears. The dark waters roared and seethed around them.

Commanding Officer and coxswain stood with the look-out men on the conning-tower. The cold air was cooling to their fevered temples. Their eyes were burning. Their gaze sought some resting place in the enveloping darkness. But there was nothing save the white gleam of the foam-caps on every side.

Dumb pain was gnawing at the hearts of these brave men.

"Why?"

That one word hammering within their brains, eating deep into their souls.

They heard it in the howling voice of the wind. It came to them in the roar of the waves over the bows.

Ragged clouds scudded like shadows above their heads.

The German Ensign, tattered by many a storm, fluttered at the stern.

The raging tempest tore at the wireless aerial. Mountainous waves bore down upon the vessel. Then one gigantic billow swept both flag and aerial overboard. Heavy seas battered upon the conning-tower.

"Alarm!" jangled the bell through the pitching submarine.

The watch above lashed themselves fast, lest they be washed overboard.

Their faces were aglow. They were sailors. Trained to the sea. Tried by many tempests.

Laughing aloud, they shouted to one another:

"Government order in Berlin: all storms prohibited!"

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" No more rough weather ! "

Pitching and heaving, the submarine sped through the storm-rent night.

• • • • •

Submarine 241 was cruising over the empty spaces of the ocean on the morning of the twenty-second of October. She was some sixty miles south of Cape Clear. Suddenly on the north-western horizon a little black dot appeared. No—there were four of them. Smoke-plumes faint as a breath of vapour.

The look-out men kept their eyes riveted upon them.

Sub-lieutenant Graf meanwhile was looking out to port. The horizon was clear.

Boatswain Scholz and Leading-seaman Schlager kept the four dots in view.

" Destroyers," said both at the same moment.

Graf reported to the Commanding Officer.

Lieutenant-commander Volker came on deck at once. A single glance was enough. The destroyer flotilla was heading at high speed direct for the U. 241.

Alarm ! Dive !

The vessel dropped like a descending lift.

At a depth of one hundred and thirty feet she remained suspended. The motors were shut off, in order that no sound should reach the enemy hydrophones. Nobody was allowed to speak. Thirty pairs of ears were listening to the sound coming from above.

Like the rush of beating wings from some flock of giant storm-petrels it drew near, passed over their heads, and ebbed rapidly away to the south-west.

Twenty minutes later Commander Volker ordered the periscope to be raised. As it emerged above the shimmering green surface of the water, a strange sight met his eyes.

Upon the horizon were dozens of tiny plumes of smoke.

Apart from that, all was clear.

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U. 241 rose to the surface.

Most of the crew came on deck. In the conning-tower the watch, the helmsman, the officer on duty, the coxswain, the artificer. In the middle, slightly higher than the rest, the Commanding Officer.

All eyes were turned to port.

In a long line, embracing almost the whole south-western horizon, a big convoy was steaming. Some thirty merchant vessels and liners. Between them here and there the masts of warships, around them a girdle of destroyers.

Not a sound was to be heard.

The enemy ships, about fifteen miles distant, were making for the Bristol Channel.

The men on the submarine gazed as though this was the first time they had seen such a spectacle. But they showed no surprise.

These were ocean-going vessels from America, bringing munitions, guns, troops, food for the enemies of their fellow-countrymen.

On board the submarine they had torpedoes and shells.

But they might not fire them.

Order of the Imperial Government through the Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet:

"Passenger and merchant shipping must not be attacked!"

The career of the German U-boat, full of the splendid promise of success, was at an end. That was what they felt, as they stood there watching the convoy—these men who had fearlessly and loyally taken upon themselves the perilous submarine service.

Still they stared out over the ocean, and could find no word to speak what was in their hearts.

"What a shame!" said Leading-seaman Schlager at last.

The silence was broken.

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"The blighters in Berlin have gone out of their minds!"

"How can Admiral Scheer put his name to such an order?"

"It's the new Government!" said Sub-lieutenant Graf.

"They want peace at any price because they're frightened of going to the front themselves!" declared the artificer.

"A fine peace they'll get, if this is the way they go about it!"

Commander Volker was overwhelmed with questions. To each he returned a straightforward answer, reassuring the men. But they knew in their hearts that they would find the Fatherland a different place from the country they had left.

One by one they went below. For the first time they felt depressed at the thought of going home.

U. 241 left the convoy farther and farther astern, and soon the tiny submarine was alone once more on the boundless surface of the sea.

Course set for home.

On that same morning German U-boats were sailing homeward through every sea.

Outside the British North Sea ports, off the Shetland Islands and the coast of Norway, in the Atlantic Ocean, off the Irish coast, in Cardigan Bay, in the Bristol Channel and the Irish Sea, off the south coast of England, in the Bay of Biscay and the Mediterranean, in the English Channel, off the west coast of France—everywhere they had turned their bows during the night of the twenty-first of October and set their course for home.

Thus was an end put to the mightiest deeds of daring in the whole naval war.

Britain was saved in her darkest hour since the war began.

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They knew it in London.

Code messages. Urgent! Urgent! Urgent!

London to Paris; Paris to Allied Headquarters: "Redouble the attack!"

London to New York: "Send ships, cargoes of food!"

They must hurry. Even if the submarine war was suspended only for ten days, it meant the salvation of Britain.

Storm over the Atlantic.

The returning German U-boats can scarcely make headway. The elements are raging in fury. Waves like towering mountains. Hurricanes. Squalls. Lowering, leaden skies.

Three faces, tense and weary with watching, are bowed in the shelter of the breastwork of the conning-tower of U. 118. They represent three ranks. Officer. Petty-officer. Seaman.

Since midnight the vessel has been running in the teeth of a gale ever mounting in intensity. Here man stands by man as never before. The seaman by his petty-officer. Both by the officer. The officer by his men.

But all three by their native land.

Weariness numbs their arms and legs. The coldness of the drenching water strikes to their very bones. They gaze fixedly across the foaming sea, and when a wave sweeps over the conning-tower none of the three lets his companions out of sight.

To one side masts and funnels emerge through the storm; smoke-streamers trailing aft. A British drifter. Swift as an express train she races by. The enemies see one another. But the forces of Nature prevent them from attacking.

On the morning after the third night of storm a rudder-

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less U-boat was drifting broadside on over the Atlantic north of the Hebrides.

A prey to the raging tempest, she had been driven by the waves with headlong speed back upon the course she had so laboriously made during two days, with only one motor functioning.

Waves towering as high as houses broke over her time and time again, yet the tempest could not tame this tiny vessel.

For a day and a night the storm had chased her over the boiling seas. Now it leapt back with a yell, recoiled to the level of the water, and gathered strength for one last terrible blow. Just as the vessel was balanced on the crest of a gigantic wave, the storm struck out in its fury, lifted her clean into the air, and flung her with shattering force broadside on to the water.

This at last must be the end !

Like iron the next wave thundered over the vessel.

Two look-out men hung as if lifeless in the straps with which they had lashed themselves. Only Leading-seaman Brinkmann was still able to stand upright. His numbed fingers gripped the bent safety-stanchion.

Within the submarine all was devastation. The technical staff were working feverishly, hampered as they were by the motion of the vessel. The diving apparatus had to be repaired, for otherwise it was impossible to submerge the vessel. The compartments swayed and danced as though they were balanced on the point of a needle.

Two men with broken arms lay in their bunks.

Objects hanging on the walls swung to and fro. The vessel rumbled like a great taut drum.

The drum-stick was the storm.

Brinkmann crouched down each time he saw a high wave coming.

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" Look out ! " he shouted, as though to himself. The storm flung the words back into his ears.

Knowing not what to do, he fixed his gaze ahead. Nothing but foam and spray on every hand. Uneasily his eyes wandered again to his two comrades. A fresh squall bore down ; the next wave engulfed him.

" Boatswain Eiken ! " A despairing cry. His hands clutched the empty air. The sea had swept the boatswain away.

The tempest howled with a triumphant note.

Below the hatch was flung open. Swift hands released the unconscious look-out man and carried him into the vessel. Then Brinkmann followed. The next wave thundered over the closed hatch.

Orders in the control-station. Ponderously the U. 186 turned downwards ; as though dragged by a thousand hands she began to sink lower.

At last. The motion became slower, more regular.

The manometer registered two hundred feet. The submarine had dived below the storm.

PEACE AT ANY PRICE

A seamen's tavern off the Gökerstrasse.

In the front room, containing the bar, opposite which a platform has been rigged up, sit groups of sailors and a number of civilians.

The back room also is occupied. Thick clouds of tobacco smoke. Crowded tables. Dock labourers, thick-set, big-boned. Many seamen, two petty-officers, here and there a man in field-grey. A committee meeting of the Independent Social Democrats.

Leading-stoker Bernhard Kuhnt, in civil life a party secretary and now a clerk in the dockyard, is speaking.

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" It is essential that all ships seized by us should work according to a unified plan. Where it is not possible to induce the stokers to leave the stoke-hold, it is absolutely necessary to put the anchor capstan out of action. The best method is to occupy the forward compartments and to lash the anchor cables in the manner just explained to us by our Comrade from the *Thüringen*.

" Comrade Mehring has brought us important news from Bremen regarding the deliberations of the Berlin Central Committee, on which all revolutionary parties are represented. I myself can only say this, Comrades: action is being taken, and we Independent Social Democrats will see to it that the peace moves initiated by Wilson are not frustrated by the Admirals.

" In all circumstances, keep your eyes and ears open. When we give the word all ratings must rise spontaneously against the arbitrary authority of the officers. Down with the war! Long live the International!"

A murmur of approval. In the next room the electric piano is tinkling the tune of, " Oh, Germany, Thou Land of Honour."

A sailor from the *Helgoland* rises to ask:

" Can we rely on the Members of the Reichstag not to leave us in the lurch, as they did our comrades in the *Prinzregent* * last year?"

Through the haze of smoke all eyes are fixed on Kuhnt.

He contemplates his carefully tended finger-nails for a moment, and then says: " Those were tactical manœuvres in 1917, which cannot be properly appreciated until after we have attained our objects and secured a speedy peace and the establishment of the Republic."

That satisfies the sailor from the *Helgoland*.

A man named Schlegel announces that public meetings will be held during the next few days.

* The battleship *Prinzregent Luitpold*, in which a mutiny occurred in July, 1917.

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" Comrades from the ships, look to it that you attend in force ! "

The Red agitators from the ships disperse, their heads crammed with revolutionary ammunition and their blue shirts bulging with handbills and broadsheets.

The room resumes a more convivial aspect. The dockyard grandees linger in their places for a while. One or two of them stroll over to the bar. Kuhnt entertains the company with a song.

THE MUTINY IN THE BATTLESHIP *NASSAU*

The battleship *Nassau* is lying in dock.

The searchlight position on the forward bridge affords a magnificent panorama of the Imperial dockyard. It is a maze of workshops, rail-tracks, sheds, bridges, basins, cranes, slips and machine shops. Steel skeletons of vessels under construction, scaffolding and masts are silhouetted against the clear October sky.

Coal-dumps, like broad black stripes, line the quays and bulwarks, to which trawlers, mine-sweepers and light cruisers are moored.

Everywhere there is the din of a shipyard at work. Tongues of flame leap up. White steam hisses into the air. Sloping glass roofs glow red, and then turn pale again.

Thirty thousand men are labouring here night and day, shift giving place to shift without intermission.

Trainloads of raw materials and coal roll up unceasingly. The white smoke of the locomotives is quickly dissipated in the glistening sunshine.

There is the long-drawn shriek of whistles. Sirens hoot. Crane-whistles emit their warning blast. The sound of human voices is borne away on the wind. High above all is enthroned that landmark of Wilhelmshaven,

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" Long Henry." This, the largest floating crane in the world, rears its head above the cloud of steam and smoke that hangs over the port, and peers out over the land of Oldenburg. A faithful guardian and aid of German labour.

Lying in dock.

Aboard the ship it was chilly and inhospitable. There was no steam in the radiators, for the boilers and engines were being overhauled. There was an all-pervading smell of paint and tar.

The furious chatter of electric riveters filled the casemates. Drills crunched their way through iron and steel. Cascades of sparks flew up. Everywhere there was the ring of hammers and the rasp of files. Oxy-acetylene welders were brought into action.

In accordance with the schedule of duties while in dock, the whole crew was kept hard at work from early morning until late at night, assisted by dockyard labourers and engineering specialists of all kinds. The chief boatswain was in his element. His sole preoccupation was how to allot tasks to every man of the crew. Reflectively he gnawed at his long beard, worn *à la Tirpitz*. He was satisfied. The tempo of the work met with his approval. Not a single man was left without a job. Everyone was roped in. True, things did not always go quite smoothly at first, after the duties had been apportioned. Rust-chipping and painting were jobs that had to be learnt, when all was said and done. Seated on narrow planks suspended by a couple of ropes from the upper deck, the men worked away at the ship's side.

First they chipped off the rust, and then they applied a protective coating of red lead.

On the second plank, suspended near the port anchor, sat the seamen Sylvester, Nolte and Messerschmidt. Beside each dangled a pot of paint.

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Nolte was the first to drop his brush into his pot.

"Finished!" he said, thrusting both hands into the pockets of his overalls. In spite of the sunshine, the air rising from the depths of the dock was chilly.

"Always first!" answered Sylvester. "We've not done ours yet."

"Have you fixed up your leave already?"

"Yes; I'm going to Bremen."

"Well, that's damn decent of the Old Man."

By this time both Messerschmidt and Sylvester had finished too.

"Hullo there, on deck!"

Gorch Schmidt, who, with Herting, was stationed on the forecastle to attend to the raising and lowering of the "stages," leaned over the rail.

"Another yard, Gorch!" shouted Nolte. They rubbed their numbed fingers and waited.

"Ready!"

Swinging slightly outward, the plank slid slowly lower.

"Stop!"

Without speaking, they set to work again.

Chief Artificer Hundsdörfer was well satisfied, too. His gunner's fatigue party had acquitted itself well. He had no fault to find. Indeed, he was already in a position to report progress to the First Officer.

In one of the flats below deck. Gunner's mate Schlenther, Seaman Cramer, Seaman Thomä. The gunner's mate was all dressed up for shore leave. Thomä was brushing the last specks of dust from his great-coat. Gunner Kiesel came in. Small in stature, but a dandy. Then Boatswain Schrödter and Gunner Rehbein. All of them were carrying brown leather gloves in their hands.

"Good day, Baron."

This greeting was for Boatswain Schrödter. The men addressed one another by their civil rank.

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" I'm going now, Cramer ; so you know where I am if I'm wanted ! "

" Right you are. If the Chief asks for you, I'll say Gunner's mate Schlenther has just this moment gone out."

Marching in goose-step, the petty-officers left the compartment.

The hardest work of all fell to the lot of the engine-room personnel. Cleaning out furnace-grates. Boiler-scraping.

Hammers were banging away in No. 4 boiler. The inspection lamp shed only a faint light in the suffocating atmosphere. The men were covered with orange-coloured boiler-scale. As often as the hammering ceased, torrents of oaths broke forth.

" Bloody sweat-hole ! "—" Damned filth ! "—" I'd like to shove the Old Man in here, just to show him what it's like ! "

Covered in dust, their faces smeared with ashes and dirt, they paused to look at one another.

" No use shouting about it."

" It's got to be done."

" And there's leave coming on Sunday. We'll go to Bremen if you've got any money ! "

" And not come home till morning ! "

" Then to it, boys ! "

Furiously thundered the hammers in the boilers. Leave. Leave. Leave.

The First Officer was well pleased. The men worked with such a will and the overhaul proceeded so rapidly that the work was completed long before the appointed time.

The command was duly appreciative of what had been achieved, and, by way of reward, announced twenty-four hours' leave for Sunday, the twenty-seventh of October.

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This announcement was greeted with cheers of delight. It put the crew in a better humour.

The delight with which seamen and stokers received the granting of the Sunday leave was anything but welcome to the organised " Red " dockers working on board.

Ever since the ship had come into dock on the previous Friday, they had been making ceaseless efforts to disintegrate the fighting spirit of the men.

Adopting an honest, downright pose, they undermined discipline wherever they could, criticised everything, and played off the officers against the men.

Where they found a man receptive to their promptings, they spoke in more direct terms. An invitation to the next evening gathering did the rest.

They grumbled at the bad provisioning on board, but in the casemates during the dinner interval they ate their fill of these very provisions, and were never slow to cadge ration bread from the ratings.

By way of thanks, they deposited their revolutionary eggs in crafty and surreptitious ways. After their morning snack or evening meal they never forgot to leave their sandwich-papers, carefully smoothed out and folded, lying beside the gun-turrets or on the forecastle.

It could scarcely be merely fortuitous that these printed sheets usually turned out to be newspapers published by the Independents and Social Democrats.

Other agitators carried on their illegal propaganda more effectively.

They surreptitiously placed broadsheets on the plate-racks, or left them lying in the wash-basins on top of the men's lockers. And though most of these missives found their way into the capacious waste-paper baskets, some nevertheless fell into the hands of men who pored long and reflectively over their contents.

In the ship itself there was little opportunity for discussing such matters. But there remained the dock-

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yard latrines. These were hidden between coal dumps and brick buildings. Each closet bore upon its door a large number. Sentries from the ships in dock stood on guard.

Here was the very place to talk these things over unmolested and unobserved. Here the agitators got to know one another. Here they kept their rendezvous. Here mutiny was openly preached. Here the wildest rumours were started. Here there was exchanged what has been known from time immemorial as " latrine-gossip." From here the path led straight to the back rooms of taverns, where the Red organisations held their meetings.

Thus did pacifism insinuate itself into the ships, aided by gossip and personal rancour.

By insensible degrees the slow poison spread among the crews. Every fault in the organisation of the Fleet was exaggerated beyond measure, and acts of interference on the part of superiors played into the hands of the agitators. They found fault with everything, sowing discontent and apathy among the men. Enthusiasm for work was undermined, *morale* disintegrated, and unity destroyed.

Even such men as merely listened willingly, without going so far as to meet the agitation half-way, degraded themselves morally.

If anyone raised objections, he was liable to be roughly handled. To have reported the matter would have been considered dishonourable ; it was the officers' business to keep their eyes and ears open. But upon officers and men alike inaction and remoteness from the war was having its deadly effect. Thus many circumstances worked together towards the same end. It was a terrifying situation.

Then, like a bombshell, came the order from the Squadron Commander :

" *Nassau* to coal on the morning of the twenty-seventh of October, and then put to sea."

Even before the order had been fully comprehended on

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the quarter-deck, the news was leaping from casemate to casemate, burrowing down to the stokers' quarters, passing from man to man.

A murmur ran through the ship. The mood of joyful anticipation was destroyed at a single blow.

The trousers which the men had been so carefully creasing in their hammocks for days past could not now be worn. The Sunday leave so eagerly looked forward to was cancelled.

The men stood about in embittered groups. Stokers and seamen hurried along the decks. They felt that their honour as sailors had been slighted.

"Leave, leave!" the words echoed from group to group. Excited arguments took place.

"It's nothing but treachery!"—"They've let us down!"—"First we work like hell, doing over-time, and then they stop our leave!"

Now the seducers came forward, finding willing listeners. Dockers and seamen openly incited the dockyard division against their officers.

"The officers have gone back on their word!"—"Only coolies like you would stand for it!"—"It's a bloody fraud!"—"Why don't you put a stop to it?"

Curses were raised. When an officer approached, the groups melted away.

"Leave!" yelled someone in the background. The agitators were not to be deterred. This was the moment to strike.

"Down with militarism!" "Refuse duty!" "Force them to give you your rights!" "Stop the war!" "We dock-workers will stand by you!"

Thus did the Red agitators goad the seething indignation of the ratings.

Nine p.m.

"Silence in the ship!"

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The men were sitting under their slung hammocks. Chief activity centred in No. 2 forward battery, next to the barber's shop. Here the line to be adopted on the morrow was decided and communicated to the rest of the ship.

Several times the officer of the watch passed through the forward battery. The shades of the electric lights had been raised again. No one was thinking of sleep.

Rage and hate were written on countenances normally placid. Fists were clenched. The catch-words of the revolutionaries were taken up.

By eleven o'clock most of the men had sought their hammocks. The lights were shaded once more. Only the dark corner of the forward battery was still occupied. Suddenly steps were heard, approaching from the port side aft. A light shone through the bulkhead, came nearer. An officer's sleeve-stripes could be distinguished.

Making the rounds.

" What's going on here ? "

" Get into your hammocks ! "

Sub-lieutenant von Frankenberg addressed the order hesitantly to the men in the dark corner. Then he passed on his rounds, accompanied by the messenger.

Shouts from the men pursued him as he went.

" Leave ! " " Keep your word ! " " We've finished with this ! "

A light fog was brooding above the dockyard on the morning of the twenty-seventh of October. It hung like a veil over the deck of the battleship *Nassau*, making the air damp and cold. Dew dripped from the rigging and cables, and from the iron deck-beams of the superstructures.

On the middle-deck the officer and boatswain of the watch were fiddling with the clock that hung near the entrance to the ship's office.

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" It means bad luck, Schrödter, when the ship's clock stops."

" I hope nothing unpleasant will happen to-day, sir. The men sat in the corners rather late last night, and we couldn't get them to turn in."

Leading-seaman Müller, returning from his duties aft, pricked up his ears to catch what was being said ; but unfortunately for him the conversation broke off at this point.

" Time to call hands."

The boatswain's whistle shrilled in a long-drawn blast over the deck, and half a dozen answering signals came from the compartments below. An infernal tumult began.

The petty-officers on duty, the men of the morning-watch and the divisional warrant-officers went dashing through the quarters shouting, " Hurry, hurry ! Lash all hammocks ! "

The lights were switched on. Bulkhead doors banged. Shouts. Shrill whistles. Movement spread slowly through the casemates. As yet, no one protested against the orders. But then——

" Lash hammocks ! Hands to wash ! Put on coaling overalls ! "

The order was drowned in a howl of rage.

The agitation of the previous night was bearing fruit.

" All hands to breakfast ! "

In the forward battery the passive resisters had established their headquarters. Though a sausage ration was issued with the customary bread and coffee, nothing could now stem the tide.

From end to end of the ship ran the word :

" Refuse duty ! "

In accordance with the orderly-book, the officer of the watch issued his commands.

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" Fall in by divisions at coaling-stations ! "

A wave of unrest ran through the ship. Not half the ratings came on deck. Officers and men faced one another, stirred to the depths by antagonism.

Apathy, defiance, bitterness, rose in resistance to the words of command.

Work proceeded at a dawdling pace. Warrant- and petty-officers waged a hopeless struggle against the dilatory spirit of the men.

" Set to, there, Harras ! "

" Aye, aye, sir."

But no one dreamed of putting his back into the work. Inflamed against their officers, the men gathered in groups, trying to hide behind one another's backs, and refused to carry out orders.

" Bo'sun, I must knock off for a bit ! " " Me, too ! "

And those who went did not return. They fore-gathered in the vessel's many corners, alleyways, and store-rooms. The instigators of this shabby behaviour had long since disappeared.

Slowly and laboriously the coaling tackle was got out.

Warrant-officers, petty-officers, and even the commissioned officers themselves were obliged to lend a hand in the work.

The ratings nudged one another, grinning at the spectacle.

Meanwhile, the vessel was being manœuvred out of dock. This task demanded the full attention of the command, and there was no time to deal with the reports of refusal of duty that kept on coming in.

At length the vessel was made fast in the South Harbour.

The half-deck sentry jumped to attention. Captain Reclam and Commander von Helfft went into the ship's office. The Commanding Officer's face was grave, very grave. Just in all things, and constantly solicitous for the

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welfare of his men, this blow wounded him cruelly. In his relations with his officers he was aloof, but correct.

" The orders of the day, please."

" Eleven o'clock, dinner; twelve-thirty, fall in at coaling stations."

" Very well; then all hands muster aft at noon."

" All hands to dinner ! "

In the forward battery and the starboard position were gathered the disrupters of discipline.

There was a clatter of tin plates. Muttered curses. Oaths. Each man tried to goad his neighbour to defiance. Little beads of perspiration stood out on the low foreheads of the secret agitators.

" All hands to muster aft at twelve o'clock ! "

Leading-seaman Brass gave a start. What was going to happen now ? Another damned hitch in the plan. They had reckoned on a very different course of events, and the Comrade last night had promised support from the dockers.

" Hell ! " he swore aloud. Now they would have to come into the open. He blenched at the mere thought of it. But if they didn't do that, everything would be over. Fuming, he aimed a dig at his neighbour, who was placidly scraping up the contents of his platter.

" Ede, what's going to happen now ? "

Brass got no reply. Seamen and stokers came flocking to the casemate. Brass got up. Ede got up. The men gathered in a group around the gun. All sorts of suggestions were put forward in rapid succession. Then from the midst of the throng came a voice :

" Let's all go to the forward battery ! "

That was the thing to do. A dozen voices took up the proposal. The group dispersed. . Five minutes later the bulk of the crew had received word : " After dinner, all go to the forward battery ! "

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In the other mess-decks things were livelier. Blows were exchanged between the more circumspect ratings and those who had been inflamed by the agitation. In No. 4 casemate the peasant Seppel seized a stoker who was traducing the Commanding Officer, and with a truly Bavarian oath, flung the man down between-decks.

At length came the order: "All hands muster on the quarter-deck!"

The battery sentry's summons was greeted with laughter forward.

"All men to the forward battery!" roared a chorus of voices. The mess-decks were cleared. There was a clatter of boots as more ratings came up from between-decks.

"All hands to the forward battery!" echoed through the ship.

Part of the crew were standing on the quarter-deck. Most of the stokers and sailors crowded into the forward battery, but others still lingered dubiously. In vain the "all hands" whistle shrilled again and again through the ship. Unity was rent; at this moment the mighty battleship would have been incapable of going into action.

The divisional officers themselves went through the casemates, trying to get their men together.

"Get on deck, there!"

Lieutenant Rüger routed six ratings out of a dark corner. Reluctantly they went up on deck. In the next position the same thing happened.

"Orders to go aft! Come along, men!"

But they remained crouching in the half-light. No one answered. Rüger approached a little nearer. Why, that must be Mosbauer!

"Mosbauer! Whatever is the matter with you men?"

"We want our leave, sir."

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" Well, this is not the way you're going to get it. Get up. Every one is ordered aft."

That had its effect. Mosbauer rose to his feet. The others followed.

The officers returned to the quarter-deck. The first officer of the watch had been refused admission to the forward battery.

THE SUPPRESSION OF THE MUTINY

The Commanding Officer, Captain Reclam, now went forward. He wished to deal with this defiance of naval discipline solely by the force of his authority as officer in command of the ship.

" The Old Man's coming ! "

Almost in terror the hundreds of men heard the warning shout. The song died on their lips.

The revolutionary ardour of the agitators sank into their boots. Cowardly at heart, they crept away, and scarce dared to utter another word of encouragement.

As the tall, erect figure of Captain Reclam stepped through the bulkhead door and the men looked into his troubled face and steady eyes, the throng fell back shamefaced, and made a path for him. The shout for " Order ! " rang through the subsiding murmur of voices.

Calm and imperturbable, he strode into the middle of the crowd. The foremost men fell back. Those behind pressed forward. Then the ring closed round him.

Commanding Officer and mutineers stood face to face. Yet they kept their distance. He stood a head taller than any of them. Gravely, calmly, he surveyed the throng. Until at length all was quiet.

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Then he spoke to them.

Frankly, freely, sincerely, with deep concern in his voice.

From the minds of those seamen, who had listened to the incitement of agitators far out of gunshot of the war, all evil thoughts were exorcised. As the morning mists of that day fled before the sun, so the black rancour now vanished while the Captain spoke.

"Your brothers are bleeding on the Western front! Are you going to attack them from behind?"

These words were still quivering in the men's hearts as they went aft in obedience to his command.

Only in the bosoms of a few stunted creatures blind hate held sway.

In No. 3 casemate on the port side a group of seamen and stokers gathered again behind the Commanding Officer's back as he returned aft.

One of the heroes of the forward battery was making yet another insidious attempt to urge the men to sabotage.

Just at that moment Lieutenant Rüger came through from No. 4 battery position and strode up to the speaker, who immediately ceased his tirade.

As the group was being dispersed, one or two men offered resistance; and in the subsequent heated exchanges Rüger was obliged to rebuke the rowdies with military severity.

He was able to lay his hands on one of the instigators of the disturbance.

Whereupon he heard the voice of the First Officer.

"Lieutenant Rüger, don't exasperate the men!"

Swinging round, he saluted and looked down icily at his superior.

"Aye, aye, sir!" The words almost choked him, and he turned away.

But the agitator had disappeared.

With a deep frown of anger on his brow, Rüger went up

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from the casemate and strode rapidly towards the quarter-deck.

The crew stood massed around their Commanding Officer, as they had done so many times before, when the ship put out on the rolling sea.

The eyes of the "Old Man" were flashing in the bright sunshine.

He spoke of the great peril that threatened their country. Pointed out that in the hour of danger rules and regulations must be more strictly enforced than at other times. He told them that their action was mutiny, and that force could only be met by force. Then he challenged those who had anything against him, or who had any complaint to make, to come forward openly and speak as man to man.

Painful silence reigned. From afar came the dockyard noises, that never ceased night or day. Men lowered their eyes in shame. And the cowardly agitators shrank behind the broad backs of the men in front of them.

Again the Captain spoke. His voice was trembling with controlled emotion as he called upon them once more to do their duty; for in this mighty struggle more was at stake than the petty cares of every day—it was a struggle for the future of the German people.

Once more he referred to the mutinous behaviour of the men. It was no longer as their Commanding Officer that he spoke, but as a man. As father of a great family. In vain he tried to crush back the bitter grief that welled up in his heart. Tears ran down his grave and kindly face. Then he broke off abruptly with the words:

"Shame on you, men!"

An hour later.

The air around *Nassau* is full of coal-dust. Engines

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are humming. Winches are rattling. Shouts from the men on deck to those below, and back again. Down crash the laden coal-bins. A moment's pause, and their black contents thunder through the shoot into the bunkers. The crew are working with fevered energy. Like moles they burrow into the mountains of coal. Heavy roll the barrows over the planking.

Sixteen hundred tons of coal are still needed—thirty-two thousand hundredweight.

Eighty thousand hundredweight are already in the bunkers.

The streaming perspiration traces white lines on the coal-blackened faces.

From the roof of "Fritz" turret the ship's band is giving rhythm to the work. Trumpets, cornets, trombones, flutes, fifes, drums; sixteen men, a full brass band.

In the lighter amidships, the men are working like galley-slaves. The carpenter's mate cannot throw back the emptied bins and sacks fast enough. Higher and higher the lighter rises out of the water. Six or eight bins are being hauled up in each load.

"Look out!"

The men on deck are shovelling furiously. The heavers leap to their task. Leading-seaman Seyfert frees the cable.

"Look out!" thunders a second warning. The next load comes crashing down.

Gorsch Schmidt bellows something in his neighbour's ear. The man bursts into a hoot of laughter.

"Bremen!" he yells. "Let the little girl wait a bit longer!"

The bandsmen play as though their lives depended on it. Louder rattle the winches, swifter the engines whirr.

At six o'clock the *Nassau* glides through the lock to the strains of music.

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The wind springs up as she sails over the roadstead. The silhouettes of the Wilhelmshaven fortress slip by, standing in clear relief against the sunset sky. Like a giant arm with huge, clenched fist, Long Henry reaches out across the scene. Then everything sinks away aft and is swallowed in the blue haze of twilight.

Night falls swiftly.

The waves of the Jade are flecked with foam. The wind is growing stronger. Steaming at half speed, the *Nassau* passes the lights of the outpost ships just after eight o'clock.

The North Sea swell gleams white as it breaks against the boats of the mine-barrier. Black and massive, the lonely battleship glides through the open gate.

Speed is increased. The last lights of Schillig roadstead are swallowed in the night. The Nor'wester lashes the waves, forerunner of the coming storm. Farther and farther the *Nassau* gropes out into the open sea. Course : North-North-West.

Stirring, compelling, challenging, an order rings through the ship at nine o'clock.

" Both active service watches fall in on the quarter-deck ! "

" High speed " is the command to the engine-room, and the screws thunder in response.

Like some Titan, the *Nassau* speeds pounding and roaring out into the storm-rent night . . . That is the best way her Captain could have found to sweeten the poisoned atmosphere.

Two hours after midnight.

The North Sea is a great seething cauldron. The dark waves are lashed by a fearful storm. And in the midst of the foam and spray is a mighty Colossus.

Nassau.

Through the raging sea she holds her true course : North-North-West.

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The breakers thunder over the forecastle. Great masses of water sweep over it and beat in foam against turret "Anna." The spray leaps up as high as the bridge, descending upon the heads of the men standing there. Tempestuous squalls succeed the spray, chasing sleep from the men's eyes.

With a roar the water flows back into the sea, only to return again in the great waves that come sweeping over the deck. Again and yet again, in never-ending succession. The wind tugs howling at the cables and rigging, and clutches at the masts, so that they tremble and quake. It beats down in rage upon the smoke issuing from the funnel, sending it in a long plume trailing aft. And then the tempest leaps broadside at the dark bulk of the defiant ship, as though to sweep overboard the turrets of the heavy artillery.

The huge vessel quakes to her very keel; she rolls ponderously from port to starboard; but she holds her course unswervingly. North-North-West.

When the storm for a moment holds its breath, waves of unimaginable vastness overtake the ship, so that she slips back stern foremost into troughs of corresponding profundity.

High as a man's head the water rushes over all the decks, to flow back in great torrents as soon as the vessel rights herself.

Things are more comfortable in turret "Fritz" than on the bridge or in the six-inch gun casemates, although the ponderous motion of the ship can be felt even there.

The delicate apparatus vibrates slightly, registering the violence of the storm without.

Faint gleams of reflected light strike the bright metal parts of the gun. Shadows dance hither and thither on the walls and ceiling, contracting or expanding to giant dimensions according to which side the *Nassau* heels over.

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At the telescopes two men of the active service watch are looking out into the seething night. White foam, pitch-black waves, racing clouds : that is all they see.

The submarine peril is meaningless on such a night. The storm has driven that weapon far down into the deep.

The remainder of the turret crew, ratings, petty-officers and a warrant-officer, are sitting close together discussing their conceptions of what " Fatherland " means.

Lieutenant Rüger is seated in the midst of his men listening to their expressions of opinion.

A fortnight ago he saw Wilson's Fourteen Points for what they were, and branded them as a fraud.

And now, when he hears someone arguing that one's true native land is the country where one is happiest, Rüger breaks into the discussion to describe in glowing terms an incident which occurred in America in 1806.

" There's a lot of talk nowadays about democracy, freedom, the International, and justice," he says. " The idea of nationality and what we call Fatherland is set aside as worthless.

" Because of that, I should like to give you a glimpse of something that happened in America, the land of liberty.

" Vice-president Burr's revolt had been crushed, and a lieutenant named Philip Nolan had been taken prisoner with his leader.

" Both were tried by court-martial. But even in that land of democracy and the sovereignty of the people, the big man got off and the lesser one was found guilty.

" This unjust treatment roused Lieutenant Nolan to anger. He struck the table with his clenched fist, and shouted at the military tribunal, ' Devil take the United States ! May I never hear of them again ! ' "

A sudden lurch of the ship sends them all slithering sideways. Outside the tempest howls with redoubled

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force, the *Nassau* heels over and then slowly rights herself.

" The sentence of the court was : ' The Lieutenant is guilty of high treason. He shall never hear of the United States again.' Lieutenant Nolan laughed. He laughed too when he was taken as a prisoner aboard a warship. He was delighted with the voyage. He had all he wanted to eat and drink, and full freedom of movement on board. Yes, he had a good time, men ! "

Rüger pauses to take breath. All is still in the turret. Then he continues.

" Several times Nolan was transferred from one ship to another. But it was always on the high seas. Never once did he get a glimpse of the American coast. He used to talk to the officers, but as soon as he brought the conversation round to the United States, to his native land, it was interrupted. A curt bow, formal, correct— and he was alone. Never should he hear of the United States again."

The stillness in the turret is almost tangible. Outside, the howling of the storm grows louder. There is something sinister in the sea's roar. The men huddle closer together.

" Years passed. Nolan still thought all this was merely a whim on the part of his judges. But he was not so ready to laugh at it, for in the background a terrible suspicion was leering at him.

" Supposing he really was never to see the United States again. He had a good time on board. He met all sorts of fine men. He was never allowed to feel that he was a prisoner. But he never heard a single word about the United States. Never did he see his native land. At last the terrible certainty dawned upon him : he would never go home again.

" He had long since forgotten how to laugh. Each time he was transferred from one ship to another he grew

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more subdued. He became another man. This sentence that had at first seemed so lenient, this fulfilment of the catch-word we now hear so often—'I need no Fatherland'—proved to be the bitterest fate of all.

"Thirty times he changed ship after months of cruising, and thirty times he suffered grievous disappointment.

"He never saw again the native land he had denied!"

A wave of emotion sweeps through the little group listening to their officer. Time and place are forgotten.

"No one ever spoke in his presence about the land he yearned for. It was exactly as the inhuman sentence had decreed.

"War came. In the struggle against England he distinguished himself by outstanding bravery. He hoped for a bullet. But fate willed otherwise. His mission was not yet fulfilled.

"All efforts and all petitions to get him released and secure a pardon were held up at some stage of the long formalities. Nolan, the man without a country, must follow his path to the end. Only once did he unburden himself to a young officer. They were sitting alone on deck, under the flag of their native land. Overpowered by his longing for home, Nolan said: 'Ah, my country! The old flag up there! Young man, never break faith with that flag! Whatever else may flatter and allure you, remember always that your country comes first! Shame on the man whose pride is not in the honour and greatness of his country! Our country is the supreme law. Everything else must be subordinated to it, even though the service of it should drag you down to Hell! Oh, God, if only someone had spoken thus to me in my youth!'"

Lieutenant Rüger pauses. Only the breathing of the men can be heard. Suddenly the floor heaves under them, sloping to port. Apparently the ship is turning. The crew sit leaning sideways to keep their balance, and then the vessel rights herself again.

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" At the age of eighty Nolan died with a prayer for his country on his lips. He lies buried in the sea, his second home." And Rüger's story is finished.

The sailors are silent. No thought remains of discussion or argument, usually so ready to their lips.

Around the turret the tempest is howling with mightier violence. The seething and roaring of the sea can be heard even through the armour-plating.

" Fatherland ! "

Some man of the watch utters the word huskily. It rings in their ears like a confession of faith. Then silence once more.

A short buzz comes from one of the instruments. The vessel lurches heavily. The faintly reflected light dances on the gun.

The telegraphist gives a start.

" Hullo ! "

A low voice speaks from the control position. Shattering the silence, the telegraphist calls out : " First active service watch relieved ! "

As they are leaving the turret Leading-seaman Müller says to his comrade of the watch, Nolte : " Our Lieutenant is a fine officer. He knows what he's talking about, and you can see why he's always by himself."

" Ay, if all officers were like him ! " replies the other.

Nassau had set her course for home at three-thirty in the morning. Now she was cruising back to port through squalls and intermittent storms of rain. Visibility was poor, and the great ship was groping her way.

Somewhere day rose out of the sea, but its light was turbid. Towards nine o'clock the weather cleared a little, though it was still squally and rain continued to fall.

At ten o'clock she passed the Outer Jade.

Across the deck shrilled the order :

" All men released from duty until eleven-thirty ! "

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THE REVOLUTIONARY CLAPTRAP IS SWEPT OVERBOARD

After passing the anti-submarine net, the *Nassau* dropped anchor in Vosslapp roadstead.

The mood on board had completely changed.

Wilson's Fourteen Points, Parliamentarism, the new Government, Germany's Note in reply to America, and all the rest had no more interest for the men.

The storm had swept the whole claptrap overboard.

At four in the afternoon : " All hands aft ! "

The order was obeyed with the smartness of the old days.

The crew crowded up through all the hatches and hastened to the quarter-deck.

The Commanding Officer addressed them. The incident of Sunday would be forgotten. Everything was all right once more.

At supper time the conversation in the mess-decks ran on other lines. Between seven and eight that evening the ship's band played rollicking tunes in No. 4 casemate on the port side, disseminating a mood of jollity throughout the vessel. The evening tender brought disquieting news from shore. But the men refused to believe them.

Soon after " silence in the ship " had been piped, *Nassau* was lying in profound slumber.

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TOO LATE

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ON OUTPOST DUTY

It was long past midnight. Lieutenant Rüger, as officer of the watch, was pacing the middle-deck on the port side.

Fourteen paces from turret " Emil " to turret " Fritz."

Ten paces from the guard-rail to the ventilating-shaft. What a wonderful institution the watch was! One had time to meditate for hours on end. Yet his thoughts were hemmed in. Just as the gun-turrets loomed up every fourteen paces, so the events of the past weeks closed in on him like mountain walls.

Parliamentarism!—That stood for the babblers in the new Government.

Abandonment of submarine warfare!—That was treachery to the soldiers at the front.

The dismissal of Ludendorff!—That would paralyse the nation's power to strike. Then there was the state of affairs in the garrisons. The news from home. And now the Fleet. Refusal to obey orders, acts of sabotage, desertion. This way and that the thoughts chased through his brain, returning ever and again to these hideous witnesses of corruption.

Suddenly he stood still, listening. From the Outer Jade there floated across the sea the fog-note of the whistling buoy, half lament, half warning. The sound of it made him shudder in this night of doubt, of premonition of approaching woe.

He turned quickly to call the messenger and make his rounds of the ship.

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On the morning of Tuesday, the twenty-ninth of October, *Nassau* shifted her anchorage to Schillig roadstead. Other ships followed. A whisper ran through the decks. Resolute, confident, full of hope. From the superstructures of the vessels tense faces looked out over the Jade. Thick clouds of smoke still lay in the direction of Wilhelmshaven, and from beneath this canopy armoured cruisers, battleships and light cruisers emerged in never-ending succession to cast anchor in the outpost zone. Mine-sweepers steamed past. Light cruisers of the Second Scouting Group followed. The smoke from their funnels hung for a long time in the western sky. The men nodded excitedly to one another. Something was in the air. No one had told them of it. But suddenly they knew it in the depths of their souls. This time something stupendous was to happen.

THE REDS GIVE THE ORDER FOR REVOLT

The tender, carrying mails to the vessels in the outpost zone, steamed at high speed out of the lock.

On the after-deck stood groups of men returning from leave. They were talking excitedly to one another. Two petty-officers and a warrant-officer were standing aloof.

"Twenty or thirty men have deserted from the light cruiser in the lock there!"

"You're a lot of fools to be going back on board!" The taunt was flung out by one of the tender's crew engaged in casting-off the ropes.

The petty-officers turned round. The warrant-officer feigned to have heard nothing.

Below, in the steamer's mail-room, the petty-officer seated at the table took from his great-coat pocket some

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dozen leaflets folded after the manner of telegrams, which a seaman of the dockyard division had handed to him just before the vessel cast off from the lock.

These were illegal communications addressed to the leaders of the Red clubs on board vessels that had already been drawn into the net of the anti-militarist organisations.

A satanic grin spread over the petty-officer's face as he read the typescript.

> " Naval attack, 31. 10. It is intended to force an engagement in which ships will be sacrificed for the sake of an honourable defeat. That means death for tens of thousands of our comrades. It will also hinder the Government's peace negotiations.
>
> " Ships must be prevented from putting to sea under any circumstances. Adopt methods already agreed upon. ' Peace ' is the watchword.
>
> " The Revolutionary Committee."

" Kuhnt is working wonders," said the petty-officer, handing the missive to the leading-seaman standing beside him at the table.

Then he passed the letters one by one across the table. They were destined for the battleships *Markgraf*, *König*, *Kronprinz Wilhelm*, *Friedrich der Grosse*, *Seydlitz*, *Derfflinger*, *Helgoland*, *Thüringen* and *Oldenburg*.

The leading-seaman sorted them out according to the squadron for which they were intended. Where the postman was a Comrade, he put the messages with the ship's mail. The rest he stuffed into his pocket. Two of them he handed back to the petty-officer.

" Think it'll come off ? "

" It must come off ! "

" Supposing they put down the revolt by force of arms ? "

" It's gone too far for that. Twelve big ships, and then the light cruisers ! Why, that's half the Fleet ! "

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"What if there's a hitch somewhere?"

"Blast you and your 'ifs'! The great thing is that the attack will be stopped. Even if only three or four ships draw the fires, we've won the day and the Admirals won't be able to put to sea."

"And what'll happen then?"

"Then the courts-martial will get busy. Then the dockers will reply by going on strike. Then things will begin to happen. Don't look so glum, man! Peace! Even the officers' clique are helpless against that word! But wait a minute. Read this. The newspapers are calling for the Kaiser's abdication!"

The leading-seaman snatched the packet of newspapers. He spread out *Forward*, the *Leipzig People's Journal* and the *Westphalian People's Journal*. Greedily the two men devoured the catch-phrases. Everything in these pages appealed to the baser human instincts. The men abandoned themselves to the promptings of the Social Democratic word-spinners.

The sound of the engine-room bell jerked them back to reality.

They went up on deck. The tender was approaching the battleships lying in Vosslapp roadstead.

The huge vessels rose like fortresses out of the water.

Brief manœuvring. Orders. Shouts. Shut off steam. The tender was lying alongside. Everything happened in the appointed manner.

From among the ratings of the watch emerged the revolutionary go-between. A blue shirt with a little red ribbon at the throat. The secret badge of the club.

"Hullo, Louis!"

"Hullo, Guido!"

A vigorous hand-clasp, and the first message was safely delivered. Engine-room bell. The tender cast off. Heading for *Markgraf*.

From ship to ship the tender made her way. The

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message of revolt passed without hindrance to the men on board. The curtain rose on the last act of the German Fleet's great tragedy.

THE HIGH SEAS FLEET CLEARED FOR ACTION

Tens of thousands of men in the ships were suddenly lifted out of themselves by enthusiasm. In the midst of a stagnation that was consuming the fighting spirit of the crews with apathy, a miracle happened. The exaltation of their race, its might, its strength, descended upon them. The endless waiting, cooped up in those fortresses of steel, the vain watches, the ceaseless round of duties, the unavoidable irritations—all were forgotten. The sailor's joy of battle, flouting danger and death, burned in them like a flame. A single thought inspired them: now, now at last, the German Navy must strike a mighty blow against the enemy.

But even as they waited with burning hearts for the Fleet to put to sea, black treachery was snarling beneath their feet.

Thirtieth of October, 1918.

The High Seas Fleet was lying at anchor in Schillig roadstead. Cleared for action! A force that might subdue the world!

Four battle cruisers. Eleven dreadnoughts. Six other battleships. Fourteen light cruisers. Seventy-two torpedo boats.

Fifty-two thousand men on board.

Two hundred and sixty-four big guns—fifteen-inch, twelve-inch and eleven-inch.

Five hundred and sixty guns of the middle artillery.

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One hundred and twenty guns of the light artillery.
Two hundred and fifty torpedo-tubes.

From the forward bridge of the battleship *Oldenburg* two signallers were looking down over Schillig roadstead, filled with awe and wonder at the spectacle of the mighty Fleet assembled in the outpost zone.

Smooth as a mirror lay the waters of the Jade, lit with strange hues by the slanting rays of the setting sun. Grouped around the *Oldenburg*, nearest to the mine-barrier, lay the ships of her own squadron :

Ostfriesland,
Helgoland,
Thüringen,
Posen,
Nassau.

Unconventional in outline, the dreadnoughts of the latest design :

Hindenburg,
Bayern,
Baden,

tugged at their anchor chains.

There lay the heroes of Jutland, the battle cruisers

Derfflinger,
Seydlitz,
Moltke,
Von der Tann,

in extended line over the roadstead. Behind them, the modern battleships of the *Kaiser* and *König* class :

Kaiser,
Kaiserin,
Kronprinz Wilhelm,
Markgraf,

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König,
Prinzregent Luitpold,
Friedrich der Grosse,
König Albert,

formed a fitting rearguard to the imposing array.

Towards the Weser, the slender light cruisers lay at anchor, and opposite them the countless masts of the torpedo-boats rose against the shore.

All the vessels had steam up. The smoke from their funnels ascended, straight as candles, into the clear October sky.

Signal flags fluttered up and down.

Boats sped from ship to ship.

Everywhere were signs that some great engagement was being prepared.

The majesty of it caught at the hearts of the two spectators. Never had they seen the German Fleet as it was on this day.

Their bosoms heaved with pride. Mighty deeds were to be done, and they would be there, as once at Jutland.

They little knew, as they came down on deck again when the watch was relieved, that the death-worm, in the guise of Red agitators, had already eaten through the armour-plating which Old England's countless ships had failed to pierce.

AGITATION ABOARD THE *MARKGRAF*

While these two signallers were looking down in pride and awe from the bridge of the *Oldenburg*, a very different scene was being enacted aboard the *Markgraf*. A grey multitude of ratings on the forecastle was crowding round a stoker, who was addressing them from a bollard. More

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and more stokers and seamen kept pouring out of the forward hatches.

The speaker waved his arm excitedly towards the assembled High Seas Fleet.

"What do these preparations mean? They mean an attack on England, Comrades! The officers are determined to prevent peace!

"They know that they have lost the game, and now they want to seek an heroic death, sacrificing you and the ships with themselves!"

This insubordinate harangue was overheard by a warrant-officer, who reported to the officer of the watch.

"We must draw the fires!" yelled the stoker, gesticulating wildly.

"Do you want to get blown to pieces now, when peace is coming, for the sake of this gang of officers?"

"No! Down with them!" roared the crowd.

The officer of the watch had already been standing for some little time on the outskirts of the vociferous mob. The stoker was launching another tirade.

"The Government——"

"Enough of that!" the officer's voice rapped out. Then he thrust aside the men standing near him. A riot ensued. Shouts, threatening fists, the glint of a revolver. The boatswain of the watch, some petty-officers and a warrant-officer rushed into the fray.

The majority of the audience disappeared through the hatches. Seamen who had committed acts of violence, together with one or two stokers, were promptly led off to the master-at-arms.

* * * * *

It was after sunset, and Lieutenant Rüger had sought his accustomed place on the quarter-deck.

Motionless and erect he stood there. The stern features of his handsome Nordic face seemed as though

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cast in bronze. His eyes were aflame with the fire that burned deep in his strong, noble soul.

Might it not yet be possible ?

A faint hope glowed within him. The whole Fleet was concentrated there in the outpost zone, cleared for action. How stupendous was the spectacle ! Defiantly the big guns projected from the turrets over the decks of the battleships, majestic in their very repose. Each ship concealed within itself the mightiest forces of destruction. Schillig roadstead was shimmering in the last glow of sunset. The grey waters of the Jade seemed turned to molten gold. The huge warships were as though enveloped in a blaze of fire.

Nature could afford no worthier symbol of the spirit of the Fleet on the eve of its last battle.

For there was a feeling in the air that something decisive was about to happen. And it was indeed high time. Only a mighty deed could now exalt the nation's drooping spirit.

But again bitterness rose in Rüger's heart. A premonition of something from which there was no escape. The Kaiser. The new Government. He had not yet realised the full meaning of the pitiful game Berlin was playing, but he felt instinctively that the soldiers at the front were being betrayed.

The last glow of sunset had long since died away, and swift darkness fell upon the sea. Here and there stars twinkled out. With doubt and hope contending for mastery in his heart, Rüger turned and went below.

Baden.

Flagship of the Fleet.

Signallers working at high pressure.—The Naval Command working at high pressure.—The watch on deck working at high pressure.

The last boats cast off. Sealed orders are in the hands

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of the squadron commanders. Down to the minutest detail, all is prepared.

The U-boats have taken up their positions. They are lying in wait upon the British Grand Fleet's line of advance.

The mine-sweeper flotillas have reached their field of action, and have already begun work under the protection of the Second Scouting Group.

The First Squadron has received orders to weigh anchor at ten that night and go out to relieve the light cruisers screening the mine-sweepers.

Wireless communication and flash signals keep Admiral Hipper in touch with all his ships.

The High Seas Fleet is ready to go into action.

These are the orders :

Supreme Command, High Seas Forces,
Op. 269/A1.
Kaiser Wilhelm II.,
24. 10. 1918.

VERY SECRET

Official Order No. 19.

A. Information Regarding the Enemy.

The main body of the enemy's forces is believed to be in the Eastern Scottish harbours, with detachments in the Tyne, the Humber and the Channel.

B. Our Own Objects.

The enemy is to be brought to action under conditions favourable to ourselves.

With this object the entire High Seas Fleet will advance under cover of night into the Hoofden.* Enemy forces

* Hoofden—the German name for that area lying south-west of the line Terschelling-Flamborough Head.

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and shipping will be attacked off the Flemish coast and in the Thames Estuary. These attacks will compel the enemy immediately to detach forces towards the line of communication between the Hoofden and the German Bight.

It is intended to give battle to these sections of the enemy Fleet on the evening of the second day of operations, or else to attack them with torpedo-boats during their advance in the night of the second-third days of operation.

In order to assist the achievement of the main objective, the enemy's line of advance from the Eastern Scottish harbours to the waters off Terschelling will be mined and occupied by submarines.

C. Plan of Execution.

(1) Leave the German Bight in daylight, out of sight of the Dutch coast.

(2) Advance through the Hoofden, so timed that the attacks on the Flemish coast and the Thames Estuary can be carried out at dawn on the second day of operations.

(3) Attack:

(*a*) On the Flemish coast by the Second Commodore of destroyers with *Graudenz*, *Karlsruhe*, *Nürnberg*, and the Second Flotilla.

(*b*) Against the Thames Estuary by Second Scouting Group with *Königsberg*, *Köln*, *Dresden*, *Pillau*, and the Second Half Flotilla.

(*a*) Covered by the battle fleet.
(*b*) Covered by the battle-cruiser force.

(4) Withdrawal so timed that the area where we intend to give battle, off Terschelling, shall be reached between one and two hours before nightfall on the second day of operations.

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(5) Rear to be covered during the second day of operations by detachments of the Eighth Flotilla.

(6) Mine-laying by the Fourth Flotilla, reinforced by *Arkona* and *Möwe*. Eighth Flotilla to mine enemy's lines of approach.

(7) Submarines to patrol on enemy's lines of approach.

(8) Torpedo-boat attack in the night of the second-third day of operations—provided no encounter with the enemy has taken place up to then—approximately off the Terschelling light-ship in the direction of the Firth of Forth, according to decision by the Commodore of Destroyers. Orders for the torpedo-boats to rejoin the main body on the morning of the third day of operations to be issued later.

(9) Return to German Bight by same route, or, alternatively by route 420, 500, 750, according to circumstances.

(10) Airship reconnaisance, if practicable.

After the brief dusk, darkness descended swiftly upon the scene. The long rows of scuttles of the dreadnoughts, battle cruisers and light cruisers lit up. And then something white as milk came gliding over the dark water, crept up the sides of the ships and silently enveloped the superstructures.

It was fog, treacherous and deceitful as the creeping poison of the East.

Towards seven o'clock a wind sprang up, dispersing the mist, but bringing in its stead squalls of rain that lashed the decks.

Aboard *König* someone forward, with a torch, was repeatedly sending out light signals to the battleship *Markgraf*. Showers and squalls kept on blotting out the call-sign, as though Nature herself was conscious of the illegality of this clandestine conversation.

At last came an answer from the other vessel. Three

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long flashes, two short ones. It was the liaison-man aboard the *Markgraf*.

Hesitantly, as though in doubt, the Morse signs flashed from the little round scuttle on the *König*.

" How goes it with you ? "

Darkness. Then from the other vessel came a slow succession of dots and dashes of light. . . . pause . pause . . pause - - . . pause . pause . - .

The next signs were lost in a squall of rain. Then they came again clearer, this time suddenly growing more rapid. Extinguished. Call as he might, the man in the *König* could get no further answer. Finished !

Three figures emerged from the dark corner and disappeared between decks.

Reaching the stokers' quarters, they made their way one by one to the crowded mess-deck. Rapid questions, suppressed excitement.

" Stokers have been arrested in the *Markgraf !* "

" What are their names ? "

" Couldn't make out from the signals."

" Anything else ? "

" Messages suddenly broken off ; something must have gone wrong over there."

" Oh, hell ! "

They stared blankly at the iron walls, each appearing unconscious of the others' presence. The chief conspirator felt as though the shore Committee's missive was burning a hole in his pocket. Something must be done. The sound of a whistle broke into their silence.

" Form divisions for evening inspection ! "

The order acted as a stimulus to the hesitant majority. The decision was put off for a little longer, thank God!

" Meet in the bo'sun's store-room after inspection ! "

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"BELAY RAISING ANCHOR!"

Nine p.m.

"Silence in the ship!"

The last lights on board were extinguished.

The weather was clearing up.

The men's quarters aboard the *Nassau* were in darkness. Only the emergency lamps shed a faint light near the bulkhead doors.

Ten o'clock, ready to put to sea! Then one could sleep in peace until midnight.

A secret unrest in his heart drove Lieutenant Rüger from his cabin. Finding few officers in the ward-room, he went up on deck.

Ten o'clock, ready to put to sea!

His evil forebodings were gone, swept away as by a strong wind. All would be well now. The mine-sweeper flotillas had been out since yesterday, this time to Westward. Scores of submarines had passed the barrier, too, and must now be at their posts of ambush.

He drew his tall, spare figure to its full height.

This would be a mighty stroke.

For a long time he stared across at the neighbouring vessels, little guessing what tragic scenes were being enacted there. True, he saw light signals, not from the signal bridge, but coming from one of the ships—it must be the *Thüringen*. But he did not trouble to decipher them, for his thoughts were turned to home.

He saw himself walking along the dyke by the Elbe. Wonderful flowers were glowing in the hollows. Steamers were sailing slowly under the great Elbe bridge. To the left rose, steep and defiant, the walls of Torgau fortress. Behind it ranged house upon house.

Little by little the scene faded from his view, as faint misty clouds rose here and there and drifted milk-white over the dark water.

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The bo'sun's shrill whistle made him start out of his reverie.

Then he heard Boatswain Markiewicz's gruff voice giving the order :

" Second cutter crew on the forecastle, ready to weigh anchor ! "

Under the after bridge the men rose to their feet. A faint light shone through the open doorway on to the deck. The cutter crew tramped ponderously forward.

All round the ships of the squadron rang with shouts of, " Ready to put to sea ! "

It was as though they were rejoicing at the prospect of action.

Then, all at once, the secret anxiety rose again within him.

Moments of suspense followed.

He listened for the sound of the anchor chains forward.

A shudder ran through the ship. The anchor was raised, and the screws began to turn. A messenger hurried past him, carrying the wireless portfolio up to the bridge. Spectral eddies of mist were drifting over the middle-deck. Slowly the *Nassau* turned to port.

But what was that ? Anguish clutched at his heart.

The sound of hurried steps amidships.

A babel of voices.

Excited shouts from the bridge.

Words of command !

His heart hammered at his side.

" Belay raising anchor ! " Boatswain Markiewicz shouted down to the battery deck.

The vessel gave a jerk. The anchor had dropped.

And at that moment an anguished cry rang out unheard over the dark quarter-deck.

Lieutenant Rüger pulled himself together and ran up to the bridge. He wanted to be certain whether it was the fog—or the other thing.

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And certainty came to him. Bitter and inexorable.

"The advance is held up because, in certain ships, sections of the crew have mutinied!"

Cowardice had conquered.

Slowly he descended the companion. Slowly he walked aft along the dark middle-deck.

He sought some way out from the frenzied confusion of his thoughts, which returned ever and again to the ignominy of what had befallen. But the thread that might have led him from the maze eluded his grasp.

Aimlessly he paced up and down the quarter-deck. He did not heed the veils of humid mist that drifted past him in ghostly silence. He did not heed the darkness that seemed to be strangling everything around him.

He clenched his fists in impotent rage against the scoundrels who had instigated this base crime.

What access of power this treachery would give to the enemy's fighting force!

How many thousands of German soldiers at the front must pay with their lives for this ignominy!

His terrible, oppressive foreboding had become reality, bitter and cruel.

What would happen in the morning?

Brooding thus, he climbed through the hatch behind turret "Dora" and went along the dimly-lighted alleyway to his cabin.

Weary and distraught, he flung himself down in his bunk.

But sleep would not come. His temples pulsed and hammered. Question piled itself upon question, till they lay like a mountain on his brain. But to all these there was no answer.

At last the tormenting thoughts began to disperse, grew weaker and fainter, lost their clear outlines, and faded into infinite distance.

He sank slowly into a deep sleep.

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MUTINY IN *THÜRINGEN*

Battleship *Thüringen.*

Leader of the First Squadron.

A crew of thirteen hundred men.

A Paradise for adroit agitators.

Their spies and messengers were to be found in the wireless room, in the ship's office, among the stewards of the officers' mess, and among the signallers.

The forward battery messes were solid cells of the defeatist organisations.

The first and second division broadside casemates were seething with dark machinations.

The stokers' quarters were centres for the spread of revolutionary ideas.

The whole system was the work of Heidrich, Sonnenkalb, Kurowski, King, and the men who backed them on shore.

For days past, thanks to this systematic propaganda, the barometer of the crew's temper had stood at " stormy."

It was high time that the shore committee gave the word for action, otherwise a premature explosion might have occurred in the *Thüringen.*

And at length the order came.

The carefully thought-out plan for maddening and goading a crew was put into action.

False reports ! Latrine-talk ! The truth ! News of disaster !

Three hours after the tender had cast off from *Thüringen* on the afternoon of the twenty-ninth of October, the crew had been brought to the highest pitch of excitement and alarm by means of adroitly sown rumours.

Groups in the casemates.

Throngs on deck.

Dense crowds in the forward battery.

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Now they no longer assembled in dark corners, in bunkers and in store-rooms.

Under the very eyes of the petty-officer of the watch, the men began a vile agitation against their officers.

" The Kaiser has gone aboard the *Baden*, so that he may perish with the Fleet ! "

" The officers want to attack England in order to stop the Government's peace negotiations ! "

" Are you going to let yourselves be blown to pieces just when peace is going to be signed ? "

" The officers want to perish honourably with the ships in open battle ! "

These were the catchwords that Leading-stoker Heidrich yelled to the crowds in the forward battery.

These were the catchwords that Leading-seaman Kurowski shouted to the throngs on deck.

These were the catchwords repeated by the groups in the casemates.

Officers and warrant-officers went among the excited men trying to explain.

But the officers were preaching to deaf ears.

" Bloody fraud ! "

" Wait and see what's coming ! " were the words that rang in their ears.

" Silence in the ship " came very late that night.

Yet in the night was born yet another false rumour.

The officers sat longer than usual at mess, earnestly discussing the coming advance.

The stewards brought in wine. There was a clink of glasses.

" To the success of the attack ! "

They indulged in all sorts of suppositions, for no one knew anything definite. But something big was about to happen. That much was clear from the preparations.

" An advance towards England ! "

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At last the inaction of the High Seas Fleet was to come to an end.

Their thoughts reached back. Jutland. The only ray of light in four years' waiting.

But a shadow fell across the officers' pride at the prospect of battle. It was the insubordinate conduct of the crews.

Gunnery officers, those in command of the turrets, discussed the prospect of a second encounter with the British Fleet.

Questions, answers, acclamation. The crowns above the gold bands on their sleeves glittered.

"Two thousand shots!"

"The last battle!"

"Long live Germany!"

Again the clink of wine-glasses.

Toasts were given.

The officers' mood was grave. For the Kaiser himself was in the flagship.

Had it but been true!

Then the mess emptied. The lights were extinguished.

Silence in the ship.

Through the forest of slung hammocks creeps the figure of a sailor. He gropes cautiously in the darkness. His hand grips the arm of one of the sleepers.

Leading-seaman Kurowski starts up with a cry. The hunted, hungry men for whom he is fighting have flung themselves upon him and are trying to strangle him. Bathed in sweat, he stares into the darkness of the compartment, and then at the face of the man standing beside his hammock.

"Kurowski!"

A moment passes before he can shake off the terror of his nightmare.

"Yes. Anything the matter?"

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"The officers!" Kurowski is quite cheerful once more. The men in the other hammocks are beginning to stir.

"The officers in the mess—they've been sitting up soaking half the night! D'you get that?"

Someone raises the covers of the electric lights.

"They want to die like heroes. Lieutenant-Commander Rudolff said so. The last two thousand shells are going to be fired at the British, and then the *Thüringen* will go down with her flag flying!"

Kurowski has struggled out of his sleeping-bag. His whole body is trembling. This is the very thing they need for success. Rapidly he dresses.

The messenger hurries on. Although the order to rouse the men has not yet been given, the majority of the crew are already up. The sound of curses fills the casemates. Menacing fists are shaken in the direction of the officers' quarters aft.

The officers are aware that a storm is brewing.

The Commanding Officer knows the ringleaders.

He is still hoping to overcome the movement and bring the men to reason.

Interview with the First Officer.

Interview with the Divisional Officers.

Interview with the Warrant-Officers.

Sullen and dilatory performance of duties during the forenoon. The first cases of insubordination. Unrest everywhere in the ship.

Meetings in the forward battery.

Inflammatory speeches.

The Commanding Officer addresses the men.

Interruption: "We've been duped long enough!"

In the forward battery and in the two first broadside casemates discipline no longer exists.

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The mutinous sailors are masters here, and reluctant comrades are compelled to join them by threats, open or concealed.

Officers and petty-officers who try to enlighten the men find their efforts completely vain.

Once they can get a man by himself, all is well; but as soon as the ratings get together in groups they fall victims to the mass-delusion.

Reservist songs ring through all the compartments forward. The agitators are playing on every emotional string.

> " We've slept on board for the last time;
> For the last time lashed our hammocks up ! "

The intoxicating chorus echoes in the men's quarters on the lower decks.

Frenzied despair seizes the waverers, and they rush as though possessed to the forward battery.

The crew are in the grip of terror.

Seaman Werner makes to go through the hatch of No. 3 casemate on to the upper deck. A rabble of stokers and sailors rushes forward, slamming the hatch in his face and fastening the bar. Then several of the men recognise him.

Werner, a volunteer of four years' service, is a bookish fellow and has long been a thorn in the flesh of the agitators, for he has often attacked the political theories of the Kings and Kurowskis with telling effect. He has the physique of a giant—over six feet tall, broad-shouldered, with fists that grip like vices.

Now, surely, the time has come to give " the German," as they call him, something to remember.

" Well, do you still persist in your perverted views ? " roars one of the leading-seamen of the First Division.

" Now more than ever," replies Werner calmly, and turns to go. Five or six men bar his way.

" What's the meaning of this ? "

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For answer he receives a blow from behind. Cries of "Scoundrel!" "Traitor!" Like lightning he wheels round and seizes his assailant, a man almost as big as himself.

"Cowardly dog!"

His arm joints crack as he flings the man with terrific force on to the deck. Clutching at Werner's arms and legs, his attacker drags him to the ground.

Blows rain down on Werner's broad back. At least a dozen men fling themselves upon him. The panting and spluttering of the human mass are broken by screams, straightway stifled with thudding blows.

With his head down, Werner wrenches himself free from the man lying on the ground. The muscles of his arms are like steel clubs, his fists like hammers. But he cannot use them yet.

Then a blow strikes him on a sensitive spot. Enraged by the pain, he leaps up, drags two men forward over his head, and shakes the others off with a furious wrench. His feet are planted firmly on the deck. One jerk, and three bodies fly through the casemate. One of the men crashes over backwards. Benches and mess-tables are overturned. Lockers topple over. Chests full of plates and utensils collapse in ruins. Wash-bowls clatter against the steel sides of the casemate.

Four men lie bleeding on the ground.

Werner is standing with his back to the wall.

Now let them come!

With a howl of rage the remaining ten men fling themselves upon him. The first two collapse before the mighty fists. The others stagger back.

Again they rush upon him.

But Werner stands immovable. Blood from a wound in his head trickles over forehead and cheek.

Once more he strikes. Groans and cries. He seizes two men and bangs their heads together.

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Without a word the struggle goes on.

Then a strapping fellow gets sideways under his guard.

A whirl of fists, arms, legs, and bodies writhes on the deck. A furious struggle. Shreds of clothing fly.

Werner is on his feet again.

At that moment the officer of the watch, warrant-officers and petty-officers come rushing through the bulkhead from No. 4 position.

But the last of Werner's assailants has fled forward.

In the captain's office.

The Commanding Officer is making a last attempt.

He has received permission from the Squadron Commander to enlighten his crew regarding the coming advance.

A bell rings.

The messenger enters.

" Bring the men in."

Leading-seamen King, Kurowski and Sonnenkalb, with two stokers, come into the cabin.

They stand stiffly at attention.

The Commanding Officer rises.

" Stand easy, please."

Then he goes up to King. Taken aback, the latter retreats a pace.

" Now, just tell me what it is you really want ! "

The Captain's calmness and composure are disarming.

Hesitantly Leading-seaman King retails to his Commanding Officer the rumours he himself has put into circulation. Every sentence begins with, " The men say," or " It is stated in the ship."

Captain Nordmann listens without interrupting while the man has his say ; then he speaks :

" I have now received permission from the Squadron Commander to give particulars of our undertaking.

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There is to be an attack on the Flemish coast, with the object of relieving the Western front, where our army is putting up a stern defensive fight. The battleships are to form the rearguard cover for the torpedo-boats and light cruisers, which will make the attack. All other statements are lies. Tell that to your comrades."

Then he turns to Kurowski, who springs to attention once more.

"Just stand comfortably, man. Now, can you guarantee order on board?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very good. Thank you."

Leading-seaman Kurowski smites his breast again.

"I will be fully answerable for your personal safety, sir. I—we—I . . ."

"Thank you!"

They are outside the cabin again, marching in goose-step forward to reoccupy the revolutionary bastions they had permitted themselves to desert "just for a quarter of an hour."

The crowds in the forward battery greet them with cheers.

The reception embarrasses them.

Sonnenkalb addresses the men.

Mass-instincts are roused anew.

The agitation goes on.

The burden of all the speeches is:

"We won't put to sea!"

A signaller comes up to Heidrich and Kurowski. Message from the leader in the *Helgoland*.

"Ten o'clock, ready to put to sea. Essential that fires should be drawn!"

A deathly pallor spreads over Leading-seaman Kurowski's countenance. The face of his Commanding Officer appears to him. He realises that he can no longer control

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the course of events. To one side or the other he must become a traitor.

Meanwhile darkness has fallen outside, and ten minutes later lights signal to the *Helgoland*.

Immediately afterwards the recognition signal flashes out from the dark bridge of the neighbouring vessel.

Then the signal lamp silently sends out the men's reply into the lurking darkness :

" *Thüringen* drawing fires ! "

Ten o'clock, ready to put to sea !

Below, in the body of the ship, there is a stir of activity. The stokers' watches are busy before the boilers. Coal is brought from the bunkers and dumped in front of the furnaces. The fires are stirred. Steam is raised in all boilers.

Ratings scurry along the lower decks. Smoke begins to pour from the funnels. Ready to put to sea ! Despairing faces gaze at one another. The dull, hollow sound from the boilers is growing louder, torturing the crews with doubt.

Ten o'clock, ready to put to sea !

Dark masses of stokers and seamen surge across the deck. Gaze through the night at the neighbouring ships. Nothing to be seen.

The throngs flow back again into the ship.

Officers go up to the bridge.

The first brawls in the darkness on deck.

" Land him one ! "

Ten p.m. !

Ominous silence everywhere in the vessel.

Having slept its full, the mass-monster lurks below deck, ready to leap out and attack militarism, its accursed enemy.

A shrill whistle on the upper deck. Piercing, imperative.

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Then the voice of the petty-officer of the watch :

" First cutter crew on the forecastle, ready to weigh anchor ! "

Silence. But only for a second.

Then tumult breaks forth. Suddenly, out of nothing. Shouts of rage, yells, whistles.

" All men to the forward battery ! "

The casemates are filled with movement.

Herds of men rush through the bulkhead doors into the forward battery. A flood of heedless humanity, sweeping all before it.

" Lights out ! "

The lamps in the casemates are smashed to atoms.

Bulkhead doors are barred. Hatchways to the upper deck bolted down.

There is a thunder of heavy blows in the forward battery.

The anchor cable, which runs through this compartment, tautens, tugs vainly, groans, then moves no more ; it is lashed fast, put out of action. The anchor cannot be raised from the bottom. The capstan is smashed ; the ship cannot leave her anchorage.

In the stoke-hold.

An inferno of iron, coal-dust and glowing fire.

Stifling heat, the air heavy with black coal-dust.

Flickering light beats from the yawning caverns of fire, ravenous for fuel.

Long shadows leap up abruptly when the stokers crouching in front of the boilers stand erect.

Quivering manometers gleam. Water-gauges stand inert beside them. Steam-pipes and tubes coil sideways. Iron ladders rise perpendicularly to giddy heights.

All boilers are raising steam ; the turbines are hissing.

Coals clatter on the iron floor. Ventilators whirr. Furnace doors bang and rattle.

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But things are not as they once were. The stokers shrink from looking the artificers in the face. Distrustful glances are cast at the engineer officers and artificers. The men are listening tensely for some sound in the ship.

With feet of lead the slow moments pass. In a fury, Stoker Weber pulls open the furnace door. He flings in three or four shovelfuls of coal. Then he slams the door to again. Menacingly he brandishes his shovel behind the back of a passing mechanic.

Leading-stoker Schildgen is standing at the coffee urn swigging a mug of the cold brew. Weber comes swiftly up to him.

"What time is it?"

"Nearly ten!"

The telephone connecting all stoke-holds is in charge of a Comrade.

Leading-stoker Heidrich rushes in.

"Draw all fires!"

The artificer leaps up. A furious struggle for the telephone. More stokers join in. The petty-officer is obliged to give way. The men must act quickly before they are interrupted. Swiftly they call up the stoke-holds. In feverish excitement the leading-stoker shouts into the mouth-piece:

"Draw the fires!"

Sirens drone. Voice-pipes whistle. In every boiler-room the stokers rush for the telephone, shouldering their petty-officers aside.

"Draw the fires!"

The shouts drown the roar of the turbines and the whirr of the ventilators.

"Fires out!" yells each man to his neighbour. The furnace doors fly open. Rakes. Pokers. The red glow gleams fiercely on fanatical faces. Fires out! The glowing mass comes roaring out of the door and falls on

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to the deck. Water is thrown on it. Clouds of steam rise into the air, and the tongues of flame leap up with a fainter light.

Faster! The fire-extinguishers are brought out.

Steam hisses up in grey clouds; flickering flames; the roar of red-hot coals falling. Petty-officers, artificers, cadets, engineers rush in to stop the men. Hand-to-hand scuffles. Wild shouts. Lumps of coal fly through the air.

In the midst of the turmoil, alarm signals. Whistling voice-pipes.

Furnace after furnace goes out.

The officers beat a retreat.

The last furnace is put out. Dead, desolate, extinguished lie the boiler-rooms.

The authors of the deed are seized with dread. Armed with rakes, shovels and iron bars, they climb up the steps like men pursued and dash along between-decks to the forward battery.

The officers on the bridge are petrified with horror.

One report follows swiftly upon the heels of another.

"Anchor capstan useless!"

"Forward battery occupied! Bulkheads and hatches barred from the inside!"

"No reply from the anchor capstan crew!"

It is well that darkness veils this ignominy. On the forecastle the cutter crew desert their boatswain.

The Commanding Officer, the First Officer and the Navigation Officer are standing in the chart-house.

Decisions are taken, but immediately rendered void by fresh reports.

"What about cutting the anchor cable?"

The Commanding Officer shakes his head. At that moment the door is flung open. An artificer stands in the doorway, dusty, dirty, bleeding, and reports:

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'The stokers are drawing the fires and deserting the engine-rooms and stokeholds!"

The ship is no longer capable of fighting now.

Report to the Squadron Commander:

"Impossible to weigh anchor. Crew mutinied. Stokers drawing fires!"

Two or three hundred men, seamen and stokers, have barricaded themselves in the forward battery. Sentries armed with iron bars and hammers are posted at the bulkhead doors and hatches.

The rest of the men are crowding round the cable locker, from which Leading-stoker Heidrich is speaking.

A tumult of voices breaks out as the last words of his revolutionary speech die away.

Groups of men stand about arguing excitedly. There is a sound of breaking glass, trodden by heavy sea-boots. The large portrait of Admiral Scheer hangs in tatters from the wall. By the dim light of the emergency lamp a seaman cuts out Scheidemann's picture, and sticks it up in place of that of the victor of Jutland.

Ever more distinctly emerges the political background of the mutiny. A sailor known as Päckchen mounts the cable locker.

"We must not stop at half measures. Let us do as the Russian sailors did, and chuck the officers overboard!"

Applause. Shouts of approval. Their common treachery unites them with closer bonds.

"Demand the immediate disarming of the officers. Let us have arms ourselves!"

Kurowski and King push forward.

"The lash is the best punishment, if they try to do anything to us!"

Kurowski has reached the platform.

"Time for that afterwards. Now let's decide what to

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do next ! " he shouts to the Comrades. Excited replies. Slogans are shouted across the compartment.

" Storm the officers' quarters ! "—" Down with the aristocrats ! " — " Peace ! " — " Scheidemann ! "—" Put an end to the war ! "—" Hurrah for Erzberger ! "

A song : " I want to be home again ! "

" Silence ! Stop that damn-fool song ! "—" Lot of idiots ! "

An hysterical shout : " The officers are coming ! "

The men rush terrified to the bulkhead doors. Nothing to be heard. They run hither and thither in bewilderment ; Heidrich, King and Kurowski seem to be everywhere at once.

" Steady, Comrades ! "

Past midnight.

On the other decks, too, there is unrest. Little knots of men are squatting under the hammocks in the most remote corners. Taunts and mocking shouts are flung after the officers and warrant-officers as they make their half-hourly rounds of the ship.

The old cry, " Drag the leaders from their horses ! ", that wrought such endless evil thousands of years ago when it was raised by men of foreign race among the Germans, now rings to other words through the dark casemates.

" Down with the officers ! "—" Up with Scheidemann ! "—" Erzberger ! "—such are the cries that echo in the pitchy darkness of the battery deck.

From the hatches leading between-decks lumps of coal, sea-boots, wash-basins and other missiles are flung at the officers making the rounds. Torches, swiftly whipped out, reveal only slinking shadows ; the throwers have scuttled away like rats.

The groping ray of light acts as a fresh irritant.

" Out with that light ! "

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" Land him one ! "

There is no peace on board all night.

In the forward battery the mutineers' deliberations drag endlessly on.

The sentries at the bulkhead doors fall asleep. The precautions against a surprise attack by the officers are relaxed. Many men slip through the port doorway and seek their hammocks.

The revolutionary council is still in session.

Hour after hour goes by.

Drab and sobering, the morning creeps in through the round scuttle.

" What now ? " asks one shivering man of another.

" We shall still occupy the forward battery ! "

" All duty is to be refused ! "

As though in warning, the first sunbeam strikes their pale, weary faces with its shaft of fire.

* * * * *

The signallers and sentries are standing with a downcast air on the bridge of *Nassau*.

A faint light in the Eastern sky, pallid and dubious, heralds the morning of the thirty-first of October.

The morning stillness lies heavy on the scene of the shameful deed wrought by cowardly, mutinous sailors.

All talk has long since ceased, and each man is following the train of his own thoughts.

They are weary in every limb, these men on the bridge, but far more oppressive is the weight of uncertainty and doubt.

" I'd chase the funks over the side into the water ! "

Leading-seaman Schmidt utters his thoughts aloud. The others nod approval, but do not speak.

The masts of the neighbouring ships emerge menacingly

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from the morning mist. The light in the East grows brighter.

Always, on the morning watch, Schmidt has gloried in the sunrise.

But how different it is to-day!

The sun's disc is rising through a veil. Slowly its groping rays roll back the curtain of mist.

Now the first beam strikes his face.

He shuts his eyes, dazzled by the light.

Below, the ship suddenly springs into life.

The bell peals over the deck.

A shrill whistle.

The boatswain's voice:

"Hurry, there; hurry! All hands lash up hammocks!"

The first thing Lieutenant Rüger did after the ship was roused was to go on deck. A cloudless sky. The fog vanished, and with it the Fleet.

They had gone out then! All gone out!

Only the First Squadron and the ships of the König class still lay in Schillig roadstead.

A flush of shame rose to his cheeks.

He was just about to turn and go below when he heard the order given through the voice-pipe from the bridge:

"Hoist signal!"; and shortly afterwards: "Down!"

Flag parade!

Loud and clear the officer's voice rang out across the deck:

"Upper deck, attention! Hoist the colours!"

The bugler raised his bugle to his lips. With a joyous, shattering note, the old, familiar signal echoed to the sky.

The men on the upper deck stood at the salute.

Bellying gently in the breeze, the Ensign fluttered to the masthead.

Scarcely had the officer of the watch given the order:

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"Stand at ease!" when Rüger heard a voice say: "Idolatry!"

He swung round rapidly, and was in time to see the same stoker who had escaped him four days ago, thanks to the First Officer's intervention, disappear with a mocking laugh down the nearest hatchway.

* * * * *

Wireless communication is passing between the flagship of the First Squadron, *Ostfriesland*, and the officer commanding the garrison at Wilhelmshaven, and the depôt ship.

"Mutiny aboard *Thüringen!*"

"Mutiny aboard *Helgoland!*"

Questions. Secret code. Further communications.

"Armed assistance essential. Send also two transports."

Reply to the Squadron Commander: Assent.

"Two torpedo-boats and one submarine already under orders. Transports with troops leave about eleven o'clock."

Wireless messages from the *Ostfriesland* to the *Helgoland* and *Thüringen*:

"Break resistance by force of arms!"

The upper deck of *Thüringen* is deserted.

Ten a.m. The prologue begins.

For the last time all hands are summoned:

"Fall in by divisions!"

Only the petty-officers and a few ratings take up their appointed places on deck.

Then comes an order from the Commanding Officer:

"Officers and warrant-officers to my office!"

They all crowd into the captain's office. Grave faces; tall, erect figures. Sunbeams, refracted by the glass of

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the scuttles, glitter on the sleeve-bands, broad and narrow.

The compartment seems to grow darker. Shoulder to shoulder they stand in a tightly-packed throng, officers and warrant-officers side by side. The fearful gravity of the situation dominates the cabin.

Fate has ranged force against opposing force. Ruthless action is the only way out.

The Commanding Officer speaks. Tersely, in sailor-like fashion, he outlines the situation. Then the measures to be taken against the mutineers are discussed in the minutest detail.

" The corps of officers and warrant-officers are to arm immediately ! "

Finally, he repeats once more :

" In clearing the casemates and stokers' quarters every act of insubordination is to be rigorously punished. Resistance must be crushed by force ! "

" To arms ! "

The office is empty again.

Pale faces are peering out of the look-out slots and scuttles forward. Nervous, harassed, ill at ease, the mutineers watch what is happening at sea. The view that meets their gaze is calm and indifferent ; only a torpedo-boat and a submarine are cruising suspiciously in the neighbourhood of the *Thüringen*.

" It's damned quiet aft " is the thought that crosses many minds. " There must be something brewing." And one man after another slips unobtrusively away and disappears.

" I don't like the look of that U-boat, Karl. I'm going up on deck ! "

" What's up ? " ; and even the Swabian Steidle makes off.

The forward battery is like a crowded encampment.

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Groups in heated argument. Stokers and sailors rushing excitedly hither and thither. A few imperturbable ones playing cards. Others conversing in undertones.

The revolutionary staff is at variance within itself. Heidrich wants to do one thing, Kurowski something else. Others urge an attack on the officers' quarters. They can reach no decision. There is something crippling their resolve.

Communication with the *Helgoland* has been interrupted. There is always an officer in the wireless-room.

Not a single message from any of the other ships.

All at once there is an hysterical shout. The crowds rush to the scuttles of the forward battery. With a bound Heidrich leaps over a bench. Leading-seamen King and Kurowski jump to their feet. Pushing and scrambling, they reach the front of the throng. They start back open-mouthed at what they see. Two transports are approaching. Bayonets glitter in the sunshine.

" Marines ! "—" Front-line soldiers ! "

Most of the sailors shrink back in terror.

The reckoning has come.

The attack begins.

Officers and warrant-officers, armed with carbines, army revolvers and pistols, take up their positions aft.

The shock troops, in two detachments, advance forward through the broadside casemates.

Casemates Nos. 4, 5 and 6 are cleared. Likewise casemates Nos. 4 and 3 amidships.

Lumps of coal as big as a man's fist fly through the bulkhead door of No. 3 port action station. A gunlayer collapses, hit on the forehead. From both sides officers and warrant-officers push forward into the compartment. Stokers with furnace-rakes and iron bars advance to meet them. Menacing revolvers. Flashing pocket-torches. Cries of rage. Fleeing stokers.

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Lieutenant Speckmann throws the light of his torch on the nearest hammock-chest. A huge stoker leaps up at him, brandishing a hammer. The blow, which must have shattered Speckmann's skull, misses. The stoker falls. Speckmann puts his pistol to the man's chest. Two warrant officers drag the stoker away. A prisoner.

In No. 3 casemate amidships the officers find lockers smashed and empty. Crusts of bread, discarded garments, knives, forks, spoons and plates lie strewn over the deck. The compartment is deserted.

In No. 2 starboard casemate two gunlayers and a sub-lieutenant run up against a swarm of men who have been chased out of the nooks and corners between-decks. In a trice the compartment is full of struggling bodies. With thudding blows, strangled cries, and stamping feet, the tussling mob sways through the casemate. The sub-lieutenant falls. The three officers are overwhelmed by force of numbers. Harassed and desperate, the crowd rushes on towards the forward battery. Two men remain as prisoners.

All compartments between-decks are cleared.

The casemates are cleared.

The forward battery is barricaded. Officers ready to shoot stand at the bulkhead doors and hatchways.

Nearly five hundred sailors and stokers are caught in this trap.

Instinctively they huddle together. There is a wild babel of voices. Differences of opinion give rise to arguments. Scruples are stifled by harangues. Comrades who hang back are intimidated.

* * * * *

The crews of the other ships of the First Squadron are standing in dense crowds against the guard-rails. All eyes are fixed upon the mutinous *Thüringen*.

Now the reckoning must come.

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The sea is smooth as a mirror. On this last day of October the sun is shining warm from a cloudless sky.

On the after bridge of *Nassau* the telescope is passed from man to man. They speak in whispers.

"The torpedo-boats are cleared for action!"

"The submarine is lying right athwart the *Helgoland!*"

"Why, it's U. 115!"

"Torpedoing is too good for them!"

"Bring 'em out and shoot 'em one by one, I say!"

The two transports, which have steamed slowly out from Vosslapp roadstead, now lie behind the *Helgoland*, whose forecastle is black with men.

One of the steamers veers aside and heads for the *Thüringen*.

The field-grey uniforms can be clearly distinguished. Leading-seaman Schmidt snatches the glass from Cramer's hand.

"Marines! With fixed bayonets! That's the stuff to give 'em!" he exclaims with satisfaction.

Suddenly Cramer points excitedly to the *Helgoland*.

Several of the six-inch guns have swung out and are trained on the torpedo-boats.

What does it mean? They gaze uncomprehendingly at the spectacle that is being silently enacted before their eyes.

Aboard the *Thüringen* the forward turret trains its guns on the *Helgoland*.

Twelve-inch guns against six-inch. That would be something like a fight. The tension grows unbearable, and no one utters a word.

A flag signal from the *Thüringen*.

A flag signal from the *Helgoland*.

The guns are made fast again. A sigh of relief runs through the groups of watching men.

* * * * *

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Two o'clock in the afternoon.

An ominous silence broods over *Thüringen*.

At all the main hatchways and bulkhead doors armed officers stand on guard.

The steamer comes alongside to port. Officers sling fenders over the side, lower the gangway, make it fast, and tie up the vessel.

The disciplined behaviour of the Marines is encouraging. They board the battleship in silence, and forthwith relieve the officers and warrant-officers on sentry duty.

Heavy steps on the forecastle. Two detachments of Marines reinforce the guard at the hatchway leading to the forward battery.

Dead silence.—Whispered orders.—Rifles at the ready. —Right !

The Squadron Commander, the Commanding Officer, the officers, all stand like statues. Warrant-officers, petty-officers and men motionless behind them.

Shattering blows are rained on the hatch. The noise breaks like thunder through the silence. Crowbars are thrust beneath the heavy cover, which is fastened from underneath.

Heave-ho ! The broken hatch flies off. A wild yell rises from below.

The First Officer, Commander von Rödenbeck, steps up to the hatchway and looks down into the haze-filled compartment, waiting for silence. The tumult dies down. Then he gives his order :

" Now come out, one man at a time ! "

Convulsive shouts are the only answer. Rifle-barrels and fists are brandished above pale faces half hidden in the gloom.

Then a shout comes from below : " We wish to negotiate ! "

" We are not here to negotiate ; we are here to be obeyed ! "

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Already one or two men are pressing forward to the steps. The mass begins to move. Then two or three voices shout:

"If anyone tries to go up, he'll be knocked down!"

The First Officer takes out his watch.

"I give you three minutes. Then the torpedo-boat will fire a shell at the bows. You will be held responsible for the consequences!" he calls below in a restrained voice.

The hundreds of men crouch down, and a tumult of shouting begins. Not a man can hear what is being said. The battery is filled with an infernal bellowing. But no one comes through the hatchway.

Time seems to stand still.

Relentless and slow the second-hand moves forward. With torturing deliberation the minute-hand comes after.

The noise has died down. The three minutes are up. But no one appears in the hatchway.

The First Officer squares his shoulders. He turns to the Captain, salutes, and makes his report.

Captain Nordmann is jerked out of his rigidity. His face is grim. Harshly and distinctly he gives his order to the bridge:

"Signal to torpedo-boat: Fire, aiming between turret 'Anna' and hatchway!"

Officers and Marines evacuate the forecastle to leave the way clear for the shot.

Shrill whistles across the deck and through every compartment of the vessel.

"Fall in by divisions on the quarter-deck!"

Squadron Commander, Captain and Officers go up to the bridge.

The Commanding Officer's messenger hesitates; a sudden idea occurs to him, and he approaches Captain Nordmann and salutes.

"May I speak to the men, sir?"

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A moment's reflection, and the Commanding Officer gives his permission. Swiftly the messenger runs below, sped by some invisible power, to perform yeoman service for his country.

Meanwhile the signaller aboard the torpedo-boat announces : " Ready ! "

The crew can be distinctly seen loading the gun. Just as the barrel is trained on the *Thüringen* the messenger appears in the hatchway with the first mutineers, wild-eyed and distraught.

A rapid order.

" Don't fire ! " flashes the signaller, swift as thought, to the torpedo-boat. The tension is relaxed. The mutineers have surrendered.

Marines form a double cordon from the steamer along the port side middle-deck, past turret " Fritz " and turret " Anna," to the hatchway on the forecastle.

One after another the mutineers clamber out of the trap and pass the cordon. Many of them are downcast, some fearful, but most defiant and impudent. Some are reeling like drunkards, glassy-eyed ; others stroll unconcernedly to the steamer.

Men who were intimidated into joining the mutineers in the forward battery report to their divisional officers and ask to be allowed to remain on board.

Leading-seaman Kurowski dare not look the officers in the face. He has broken his word " to guarantee order on board."

Leading-seaman King crosses the gangway. He had not thought it would end like this.

Looking after the retreating figure of Leading-seaman Schiedemann, Lieutenant Speckmann thinks how much better it would be for Germany if the other Schiedemann were led away under guard.

The transport has now taken on board over three

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hundred prisoners with the name of *Thüringen* on their cap-bands.

Torpedo-boat V. 97 steams at a measured distance behind the transport, which is heading swiftly up the Jade in order to set its cargo of rebels ashore.

Destination : Oslebshausen prison.

* * * * *

Aboard *Helgoland* hundreds of ratings stood out against the mutineers.

There was fighting in the casemates. The mutineers were put to flight. Then they carried on the contest by sabotage, and vital parts of the ship's engines were put out of action.

It was impossible to lay hands on the culprits.

The men prevented the anchor from being raised. At night all was quiet. In the morning the tumult began anew. A fierce tussle took place on the upper-deck.

The mutineers were forced to retreat to the forward battery.

Two hours later two hundred and seventy men were taken off as prisoners by the second transport.

Destination : Oslebshausen prison.

* * * * *

In the other outpost ships the morning of the thirty-first of October seemed interminable.

Swill all decks !

Divisional parades !

Working-parties carry on !

The urgent desire for information and exchange of views, which could not be gratified during the hours of duty, made the crews restless and perfunctory in the performance of their tasks.

At last : " Clear the decks ! "

Leading-seaman Jupp Welter was addressing his

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comrades on No. 45 mess-deck of the No. 4 action station on the port side.

" The *Thüringen* and *Helgoland* are at the bottom of the trouble," he said. " The officers must have given the men a hot time to make them go as far as that ! "

Hein Knief seconded Welter's opinion.

" It's about time we finished with all this ! "

Welter nodded vigorously.

" The war dragging on and on, and no food left ! "

He was about to cite other reasons justifying the pitiful revolt, when other mess-mates voiced their disagreement. Three or four men interrupted him.

" They're traitors ! "

" They're no sailors, the perishin' funks ! "

" You're bitten with the same bug yourself, Welter ! "

Fritz Ahlers deposited the plates with a deafening clatter.

It was indeed high time that August Cramer arrived with the dinner.

• • • • •

Two-thirty p.m.

Aboard the ships of the Third Squadron the crews were drawn up on the quarter-deck.

The Commanding Officers read out the announcement issued by the Naval Command.

All rumours to the effect that the Kaiser had embarked in the flagship *Baden* in order to perish with the Fleet, or that the Commander-in-Chief proposed to allow his ships to be blown to pieces by the British so that they should not have to be surrendered when an armistice was declared, and so forth, were characterised as falsehoods.

Captain Weniger, of *König*, concluded this announcement by adding in a dry, stern voice :

" In such a great struggle as this, all the forces of the State must be at the disposal of those responsible for the national defence."

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Then, with a note of bitterness in his voice, he went on :

" The undertaking planned for the relief of the hard-pressed Western front cannot be carried out because sections of the crews in other ships have refused duty, and have even prevented their vessels from leaving anchorage."

There was a pause. Then, in defiance of all the rules of military deportment, one man among the thousand standing there shouted out : " The swine ! "

He raised his clenched fists.

" This criminal act of mutiny may be the end of Germany ! "

The Captain's face became graver still.

" This is the German Navy's darkest hour ! "

He stopped abruptly. He could utter no word more.

Slowly the crew left the quarter-deck.

THE NAVAL ATTACK SABOTAGED

The naval attack has been sabotaged.

The wires from Wilhelmshaven and Kiel to Berlin are buzzing.

Secret couriers are dashing to the capital.

The men behind the mutineers are not satisfied.

A second blow is struck against the Naval Command, and thus against the defensive power of the nation.

The Government demands the release of the mutineers.

Further, the ships are at last to be allowed to come into port.

The first demand is aimed against the authority of the officers.

The second is designed to hand the warships over to the Red organisations on shore.

By an extravagant interpretation of discipline, the

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Naval Command obeys. The enterprise against the British is finally abandoned, and the squadrons are sent back to their home ports.

The Third Squadron is ordered to Kiel. The First Squadron is to make for Brunsbüttel after completing its spell of outpost duty.

The stern measures by which the officers commanding the ships nipped the revolt in the bud are set at nought by the scattering of the Fleet in the various North Sea and Baltic ports. Thus is brought about a fresh breach in the structure of the Fleet—a breach between the Fleet Command and the ships' captains.

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THE END

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TREACHERY IN BERLIN

Berlin again.

The men behind the naval mutiny are in conference.

Independents, Social Democrats, Spartacists.

A few of the names: Dittmann, Haase, Liebknecht, Barth, Müller.

Trade union secretaries, party delegates, political adventurers.

They are working for revolution.

They wish to appear as peace-makers.

They are proceeding from false premises, for they count on the sympathy of the Allied peoples. They declare:

"The Allied Governments dare not undertake reprisals against the German peace-makers, for fear of opposition in their own countries."

In this false hypothesis they are at one. But after that comes divergence.

Nevertheless, the revolution must go forward.

The Imperial Government is in itself a pledge that the movement from below will be allowed to do its work unhindered.

The militarist system must be broken.

From a thousand places at once the revolutionaries are working for the disintegration of the German front.

Treason—what of it?

These men are out to prey upon the want and misery of the German people.

Heated arguments. Three points of view emerge: Barth, Dittmann, Liebknecht. The question is put to the vote.

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The revolution is fixed for the tenth of November.

Paying no heed to this agreement, the separate groups give orders to their agents at Kiel, Cuxhaven, Hamburg and Wilhelmshaven to intensify the agitation.

THE EFFECT ON BOARD

On the morning of the first of November there are only six ships of the First Squadron still lying in the outpost zone. Even the Third Squadron has gone. No trace is left of the mighty concentration of the Fleet. Only the invisible impression of the mutinies remains. The sense of infamy that hung lowering all day now descends with leaden weight upon the crews.

Oppressive gloom broods over the ships.

The duties follow their accustomed routine, but the laggard hours pass with torturing slowness.

In the evening there are long discussions. For the most part, there is general bitterness against the mutineers. Many men are indifferent. And then men returning from leave bring the news from Berlin that the Government has set the mutineers free and granted an amnesty. Official confirmation follows immediately.

Now the veriest fool can see which way the course is set.

Mutiny is punishable by death. But now, it seems, the penalty no longer applies.

A man may do what he likes with impunity, and be certain of getting scot-free ashore.

Decent men are embittered. The officers stare at each other uncomprehendingly.

Faith in the nation is shattered. Germany is hurtling towards the abyss.

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THE THIRD SQUADRON ON ITS WAY TO KIEL

At intervals of a thousand yards between each vessel and the next, the huge ships of the Third Squadron passed through the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal.

They passed the magnificent Grünenthal Viaduct; they passed the great woods that stretched right down to the shores of the canal on either side.

For hours they sailed between limitless moorlands, flat, brown and boggy.

Houses came in view. Fields, meadows, clumps of trees. Then the flat land rose to form hills. Rendsburg unfolded itself. Streets lined with splendid villas. Avenues. Handkerchiefs fluttered from the windows. Women, children, girls were waving.

The ships passed slowly by.

Great bridges spanned the canal, and above the spires of the town rose an old, romantic edifice. The scene gave place again to fields and meadows. Another high-level bridge. Levensau.

Ever onward steamed the ships.

After passing the Holtenau Bridge the foremost vessels entered the locks.

Across the deck of *Markgraf* shrilled the boatswain's whistle.

"Port watch ready for duty!"—"Men going on leave stand by!"

The ship was waiting at the entrance. A signal: Lock empty.

Markgraf glided in. She all but filled the basin with her vast bulk.

Ratings told off to handle the cables were standing beside the lock. They were approached by several Marines stationed on shore. A few tentative feelers.

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" A meeting in the trade union hall to-night about your prisoners ! "

" What, you've heard about it already ! "

" You bet we have ! "

A bundle of broadsheets disappeared nimbly beneath the overcoat of one of the sailors.

Meanwhile armed men took charge of the arrested mutineers for the march to their place of detention in Kiel. There were further incidents. Fresh arrests.

Order from the bridge : " Cast off ! "

The men on the lock-side cast loose the ropes from the bollards and were taken aboard again.

The *Markgraf* steamed slowly into Kiel Fjord. An hour later a small steamer came alongside. The master-at-arms was on deck. The First Officer, petty-officers and ratings had put on field kit.

More prisoners were transferred to the steamer and taken ashore to the naval prison.

THE REVOLT AT KIEL

The trade union hall at Kiel.

So great is the crowd, one might imagine the men are queuing up for the " red light."

Ratings stationed on shore, ratings from the Third Squadron, ratings from the *Markgraf*, Marines, dockers.

The agents of disorder in the naval port of Kiel—Kürbis, Popp, Garbe, Strunk, Artelt and Tümmel—are amazed at the swift success that has attended their propaganda.

The gathering swells before their eyes.

Gradually the orators steer the minds of their audience into revolutionary waters.

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The men arrested aboard the *Markgraf* are merely a pretext. Strunk, Kürbis and Artelt are already aware of the Government's decision to release the mutineers.

A deputation is appointed.

Then the meeting breaks up, having charged itself with a campaign of intensive propaganda on behalf of a second gathering, to be held the very next day.

On the afternoon of the second of November the tenders discharge hundreds of sailors on to the landing stages.

The trade union hall is closed. Members of the Services are forbidden to enter. Police guard the entrance.

The Headquarters staff are at their posts.

Dockyard employees, soldiers, civilians crowd in hundreds before the building, adopting a threatening attitude towards the police.

A motor-car drives up. A sailor standing in it speaks to the crowd, calling on them to hold the meeting on the large parade ground.

General agreement. A loose procession is formed. Dock-labourers, women and children join in it.

Nearly a thousand people flock together.

A disorderly mob.

One of the Independents' platform-speakers happens to be present.

Then Seaman Artelt speaks. He comments caustically on military affairs about which he knows nothing. Adroitly he plays the officers off against the men. His bitterest hatred is directed against the officers.

Shouts of applause from hundreds of throats spur him on to greater daring. Casting caution to the winds, he stirs the men to deeds of violence.

" If the officers proceed to mass-arrests, as they have done aboard the *Markgraf*, then we shall reply not only

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with passive resistance and the strike, but we shall take up arms.

"The exploited labourers and dockers have but one enemy—capitalism, which can flourish unchecked only under the Monarchy, and which is making the war a trade.

"The first blow against this system was struck in Schillig roadstead. . . ."

Tumultuous applause. Fists are brandished in the air. Artelt goes on with his speech.

"The Government has granted our comrades an amnesty. We want more than that. Annihilation of the class-State! Annihilation of militarism! Abolition of the Monarchy! Long live International Social Democracy!"

Three times the thousand-throated "*Hoch!*" for the International rings out over the parade ground.

During the night of November 2–3 officers are on sentry-go outside the station command headquarters at Kiel.

Despite the lateness of the hour, a light is still burning in the Governor's room. Admiral Souchon and the officer commanding the Third Squadron, Admiral Kraft, are discussing the measures to be taken in face of the threatened revolt.

"The Government's instructions are irresponsible!"

"The release of the mutineers strikes at the very foundations of discipline!"

"What is the temper of the men on board the ships?"

"According to the reports from my commanding officers, the crews are dependable."

"The dockyard labourers are the centre of unrest. That's where the Socialist politicians are stirring up trouble!"

Admiral Kraft makes no reply. The Governor, appointed to the post only a few days before, pauses reflectively.

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" Would we be justified in bringing in troops to restore order ? "

" I don't think the situation is so serious as that. There are still enough Marines to do all that is necessary."

" As a matter of expediency, the battleships and torpedo-boats ought to leave the harbour."

" The meeting has been fixed for six o'clock in the evening."

" Then let us sound the town alarm at four o'clock, so that the men will have to return immediately to their barracks and ships."

Having decided on this course, the two Admirals take leave of one another.

Sunday.

Gorgeous weather in Kiel.

The battleships of the Third Squadron are riding at their buoys. During the morning trouble breaks out again aboard the *Markgraf*. The master-at-arms and two petty-officers are able to restore order without assistance. There are just enough cells to accommodate the prisoners.

Immediately after dinner the boatswain pipes :

" Men going on shore leave parade for inspection on the quarter-deck ! "

Almost the whole of the watch off duty comes up on deck. The officer of the watch inspects the men. Shoes, uniform, cap.

Seaman Lämmel, whose one thought is to get to the meeting, has put on his old cap in his excitement.

" Do you think you're going ashore in a greasy lid like that ? "

Lämmel flushes red as a turkey. His comrades burst out laughing.

" Get your cap, and look sharp ! " says the officer.

The tender comes alongside. Lämmel is the last man

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to jump aboard her. A bell rings. Her bows turn shoreward.

From every ship tenders are putting off and heading for the land.

They moor at the Reventlow jetty, the Seegarten jetty, the Vineta jetty. Thousands of ratings from the ships pour into the town. The streets are transformed. Among the crowds in the main thoroughfares are many dockers and women.

People gather at the street corners. Throngs of sailors.

All at once—bugle calls and the roll of drums.

Town alarm !

From the harbour sounds the terrifying scream of ships' sirens. Loudly, insistently, they call the men back on board.

Alarm !

Patrols from the various ships march through the streets. They search the taverns, cafés, cinemas and other places of amusement.

The streets leading to the landing-stages are thronged. Petty-officers, warrant-officers, commissioned-officers, groups of hurrying men.

The screaming of the sirens strikes fear into their hearts.

" All men on board ! "

Too late !

In the centre of the town the crowds grow ever denser. Dockers, women, " coolies," men in field-grey. Socialist orators make their appearance. The throngs begin to move towards the parade-ground. Patrols are disarmed ; sailors and petty-officers trying to reach the harbour are carried along with the mob.

The station command recognises at once that the alarm has not had the desired effect. Cadets, engineers and petty-officers from the training-schools are armed. The

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naval prison is occupied. Military police guard the approaches. Squads of armed ratings from the submarines and torpedo-boats line up across the streets.

Feverish activity at all divisional headquarters. Orders go out to the barracks in the suburb of Wiek and to the Marine battalions. Despatch riders and officers in mufti come rushing in with news of the parade-ground assembly. Each fresh report confirms the gravity of the situation.

The front-line Marines and men from the submarines and torpedo-boats are standing in readiness to attack the mutinous ratings of the naval base.

The U-boat training ship *Meteor* is a concentration camp of naval officers. These men are dumbfounded by the sudden and unexpected disturbance. They cannot believe that the situation is as serious as it is made to appear.

They draw a parallel between the loyal men of the submarines and the sailors of the Fleet.

A false parallel.

Yet one or two of the officers can read the signs of the time.

A U-boat commander jumps up. Speaks.

" Brother-officers ! It is a grave sign when red flags can be carried with impunity through the streets of German cities !

" But it is a truly monstrous thing that Red newspapers should demand the abdication of the Emperor.

" The movement that has been brewing here in Kiel for days past is a political movement. It is the prelude to revolution. Let us all stand together, we men of the submarine crews and training-schools. Let us act resolutely. It won't take us long to finish with these fellows at the base ! "

Another commanding officer :

" I'll take torpedoes aboard this very night and put to sea with my vessel ! "

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A third :

" With my crew I could clear out the whole revolutionary hive in a few hours ! "

Finally, the deputy commanding officer of the U-Boat School :

" I cannot allow any action to be taken without my orders."

By nightfall nearly four thousand people have been lured to the place of assembly. Torches and hurricane lanterns cast a flickering light over the listening crowd.

Harangues by Socialist orators, harangues by Independent orators and by the local leaders of both parties.

Fanatical faces. Gesticulating demagogues. Irresponsible mob. Tumultuous applause.

To Seaman Artelt falls the final word. Drunk with the sense of his own domination over the crowd, he whips their blind desires to a fury of fanaticism. His brain is obsessed with the single idea : " I am a leader of men ! " Without restraint he hurls the impetuous battle-cries of revolution upon the mob below him.

The formless groups of discontented men are all at once united in a single whole. A single will is born. Ill-defined as yet, Artelt's hatred of the officers gives it direction and a purpose.

" All power to the Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets ! "

Thunderous applause, tumultuous shouting. Artelt beats down the last qualms of scruple :

" We will trample under foot everything that stands in our path. Now, this very hour, we will free the vanguard who were taken prisoners fighting for the cause. Up ! To action ! "

Welded into a compact mass, the thousands bellow to the night sky their cheers for International Social Democracy. Feverish commands from the leaders. Red flags are unfurled. A procession begins to form. Sailors,

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workmen, Marines, women arm-in-arm. The mile-long train wends its ponderous way to the Waldwiesen Barracks.

TWENTY TORPEDO-BOAT RATINGS PUT FOUR THOUSAND REBELS TO FLIGHT

Evening darkness closes in upon the sentries standing in front of the guard-room. A faint light shows through the windows of the neighbouring Good Hope Tavern. From the Kaiser Café comes the sound of muffled music. The sturdy figures of the torpedo-boat ratings loom strangely magnified in the crepuscular light of the street lamps. They look like a company of Frederick's giant guards, standing there with rifles at the ready. Cartridge-pouches and field equipment. Faint rustling of their cap-bands in the wind. The trees stretch gaunt arms skywards. Suddenly tumult draws near. The faint sound of singing reaches the sentries' ears. They listen expectantly in the darkness.

Sub-lieutenant Steinhäuser steps up to them and gives his orders, brief, precise.

The cordon extends in single line across the street. The noise is coming closer. Muffled, threatening, sinister.

Behind the sentries, voices are hissing.

"There are thousands of them! They'll knock you to pieces!"

"Get clear!"

Cool, resolute, inflexible stand the guard. Beside them the young sub-lieutenant.

The street in front of them is empty. But now a black mass writhes towards them. Caught by the light from some window, the red flags stand out like bleeding knife-wounds.

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The thunder of marching feet draws near. Echoes back from the walls. Song, stirring and mighty, comes on before. Behind it follow the thousands, step after step.

Only a hundred yards away now. The sailors and the young officer stand staring at the blind and shapeless monster creeping towards them.

Again the hissing whispers from behind.

"You are only twenty! They are thousands!"

The singing stops. The head of the procession is within calling distance. Crisp and clear the sub-lieutenant's voice rings out commanding the revolutionaries:

"Halt! Attention! About turn!"

The procession falters. Confusion. A flutter of alarm. Hysterical cries: "Don't shoot!" Threats. Irresistible pressure from behind forces the leaders of the procession forward. The strains of the "International" thunder over their heads. Its wild words shrill in the ears of the torpedo-boat ratings:

> "Then, comrades, come, rally;
> The last fight let us face."

Mighty and stirring, it roars on:

> "The Internationale
> Unites the human race!"

The sailors stand like men of iron. The tumult becomes deafening. Stones fly. The mob rushes onward.

Twenty-yards.

Sharp as a knife comes the word of command from the lieutenant.

"Present!—Fire!"

There is a simultaneous crack from twenty rifles, and the volley goes whistling over the heads of the crowd. The sailors in front fall back precipitately. A sudden,

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breathless silence. Then a wild shout of rage and terror. Those behind push irresistibly forward.

Now for it! Sub-lieutenant Steinhäuser and his men stand steadfast before the mob. An example of loyal fulfilment of duty.

"Present!—Fire!"

The second volley is fired into the crowd. Shrieks of wounded men. Figures staggering and collapsing. The revolutionaries surge back. They scatter, leaping, mad with terror, into the dark shop-windows. Rush into taverns and down side-streets. Flee in all directions, hugging the walls and crouching as they run. The leaders first in flight.

In face of twenty resolute men, four thousand have dispersed, leaving behind them two dead and forty wounded.

The power of the rebels has been broken.

The scattered leaders of the revolt foregather in a Comrade's house. Pale, distraught, despondent, they sit there, not knowing what to do next. The sound of footfalls in the street or the banging of a door make them start up in fear. They expect every moment to be arrested.

At last news comes. The streets are quiet. The patrols and cordons have been withdrawn. The station command has refused the request for military reinforcements. A motor-horn hoots outside. A car drives up. The conspirators rush terrified to the window. Heavy steps mount the stairs. The leaders of the Red cells in the dockyard, accompanied by an Independent orator from the capital, enter the room.

"Help from Berlin!" "The Government!"

They are saved.

Telegrams and telephone calls, instantly put through by Comrades at the Central Post Office, set the party secretaries in Berlin to work. And just one other little

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piece of business. Reports to the newspapers—a penny a line.

In Hamburg, Berlin, Leipzig, the printing presses begin to rumble.

"Special! Special!"

"Fighting in Kiel!" "Twenty dead. One hundred wounded!"

"Officers shoot down peaceful demonstrators!"

"Kiel's Bloody Sunday!"

GOVERNMENT ORDERS JEOPARDISE THE SAFETY OF THE STATE

The Kaiser.

The Imperial Chancellor.

The Parliamentary Government.

A few names of those who guide the destinies of the threatened German Empire:

William the Second.

Prince Max of Baden.

Erzberger. Scheidemann. Ebert. Hausmann. Gröber. Von Payer.

Enemies of public safety are at work. The Parliamentarians have not yet said their last word against the revolt from above.

The "Imperial" Social Democratic Secretaries of State are carrying the struggle one stage farther. The last pillar of Imperialism must be felled.

The Corps of Officers.

It was to that end that the politicians instigated the mass movement. Now these shootings may upset all their plans. The final stroke is a blow below the belt. It makes a mockery of the State's authority. But that does not matter.

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" Insurgents must not be fired upon ! "

* * * * *

The wires are humming between Berlin and Kiel. Secret instructions from the Independents. Confidential information from the Socialist Party :

" Orders issued forbidding shooting. Carry on campaign. Organise protest strike. Courier follows."

The night is young yet, and its darkness veils many secret preparations.

Money counts for nothing. Cars flash through the dark streets of Kiel. To the Marine battalion headquarters. To Kiel-Wiek. To Friedrichsort.

Great bales of broadsheets are unloaded at the barracks. The Red cells in the Imperial dockyard get to work : protest strike.

THE LAST SUNDAY ON OUTPOST DUTY

One more Sunday on outpost duty.

The last in this war.

Bathed in sunshine, the battleships of the First Squadron rock with the motion of the waves.

Inspection at nine-thirty in the morning, just as on other Sundays.

The men in Sunday rig, white jumpers with blue collars.

In rigid ranks the divisions stand on the upper-deck.

The petty-officers, blue-uniformed, line up in front. On the right wing, the divisional warrant-officers and the divisional officers. An impressive spectacle.

Aboard *Nassau* Captain Reklam strides down the long ranks. He pauses longer than usual before each man. He looks more penetratingly into the faces of his crew. Does he guess, perhaps, that this is the last time ?

After inspection, release from duty.

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Signals from the flagship !

Raise anchor !

The battleships *Ostfriesland*, *Oldenburg*, *Posen* and *Nassau* leave the outpost zone, pass the gate, and steam along the coast to Brunsbüttel.

Thüringen and *Helgoland* remain lying in Schillig roadstead.

It is a magnificent day. The sun casts long shadows on the almost empty decks of the battleships steaming in line ahead formation. The clean, fresh wind blows over them. For hundreds of yards behind the last vessel the wake stretches in a broad white streak, until it is lost at last in the undulation of the blue-green waves.

Land comes in sight to starboard.

Change of course.

The ships round the headland. They pass Cuxhaven.

All is strangely still. Hugging the coast, the vessels enter the mouth of the Elbe.

Brunsbüttel emerges to port.

Change of course again.

Towards four o'clock they pass with music through the lock. Yet there is a discord in the march that thunders out against the lock-walls.

In the broad harbour basin the ships make fast.

The *Ostfriesland* and the *Posen* on one side, the *Nassau* and the *Oldenburg* on the other.

About five o'clock the first leave parties go ashore.

Fate takes its course.

THE BEGINNING OF THE REVOLT IN BRUNSBÜTTEL

The whole area on either side of the first Elbe zone, with Cuxhaven and Brunsbüttel as the centres of disorder, had been simmering with revolt for days past.

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The Marine artillery, and all the shore establishments, had been stirred up by Socialist agitators from Hamburg, Kiel and Berlin.

Deserters, shirkers, profiteers and all sorts of disreputable elements afforded an ideal forcing-house for the doctrines of treason.

In Brunsbüttel the revolt was fanned by a bow-legged petty-officer of the Marine Artillery.

Direct communication with Berlin facilitated this revolutionary activity. The malcontents, informed beforehand from the capital and from Cuxhaven of the arrival of the ships, had everything prepared to draw their crews into the whirlpool.

There were agents in almost every vessel, and that same Sunday evening the Red shore organisation was able to establish contact with ratings from the *Posen* and *Ostfriesland*.

THE TRAGEDY OF THE IMPERIAL NAVY

Wireless telegrams.

From Berlin-Nauen to Wilhelmshaven.

From Wilhelmshaven to Kiel.

The Naval Command, in pursuance of orders, was transmitting the "Imperial" Government's senseless prohibition of shooting.

The Governor of the naval port of Kiel obeyed.

The tragedy of the German Navy had become grotesque.

Bethmann-Hollweg, Admiral Müller and Friedrich Payer were but three of the Emperor's baleful counsellors. They must bear their measure of guilt, full to overflowing, for the Fleet's failure.

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It began with the order of the Supreme Council at the outbreak of war :

> " His Majesty commands the Fleet to hold back, and to avoid engagements that may lead to heavy losses . . ."

and

> " His Majesty commands that in case of urgent necessity the Fleet may put to sea only by express order of His Majesty. . . ."

The battles of Heligoland, on the twenty-eighth of August, 1914 ; of Dogger Bank, on the twenty-fourth of January, 1915 ; and the outpost engagement on the seventeenth of August, 1915, went against us because the High Seas Fleet never raised its anchors from the bottom.

Chancellor Prince Max of Baden's order : " No coercion. Avoid conflicts. Don't shoot," was the final stroke.

THE FOURTH OF NOVEMBER IN KIEL

In the forenoon of the fourth of November silence descends upon Kiel. The dockyard goes on strike. The armament industry. Something inconceivably monstrous in any war. In this war equivalent to murdering the soldiers at the front.

Aboard the warships the round of duties follows its normal course. But outside, in Kiel-Wiek, open revolt is raging. The broadsheets distributed during the night are working like dynamite.

Whole companies refuse duty. They declare their officers deposed. Soviets are elected. The Government's order forbidding firing on insurgents breaks down the last barriers of caution.

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Artelt and Tümmler incite the men still further. Arms are distributed. Lorries manned. The barrack gates are guarded by naval ratings. No officer is allowed to pass. Bands of sailors, armed to the teeth, wander aimlessly through the streets.

In the trade union hall are assembled the delegates from the dockers and the Soviets. A motley crew, with party fanatics and hangers-on among the number.

The first Workers' and Soldiers' Soviet is hastily formed. Seaman Artelt is the first President. Two telegrams already despatched to the Reichstag Deputies Haase and Ledebour are ratified by the assembly. The men quickly formulate their demands :

Recognition of the Soviets—Abolition of the salute—Equal rations—Closing of officers' mess-rooms—Freedom of speech—Release of men under arrest—Abdication of the Emperor.

HOW KIEL WAS DELIVERED UP TO THE INSURGENTS

Seaman Artelt, accompanied by a comrade, drives up to the Station Command. The Governor is ready to treat.

Covered in confusion, Artelt stands before Admiral Souchon. The Governor's calmness and courtesy make the seaman forget all his revolutionary tirades.

" Pray be seated."

The Imperial Admiral and the revolutionary face one another across the table.

" What can I do for you ? "

Artelt reads out the demands from a sheet of paper.

Admiral Souchon concedes everything that is in his power to grant. Then the President of the Supreme

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Soviet and his adjutant find themselves in the street again. Artelt feels very weary all at once. These diplomatic negotiations have a sobering effect. They are not at all in his line.

Arrived at the trade union hall, a telegram is handed to him. Secretary of State Hausmann and the Social Democrat Noske announce their coming.

Artelt starts out of his reverie. Why aren't the Independents coming? Something is amiss here. The whole business suddenly appears to him in a very suspicious light.

Meanwhile the troop transport trains of the Ninth Army Corps are hastening to Kiel.

The station is occupied by the insurgents. One train is switched over on to a dead rail and the men disarmed as they alight.

But the next battalion clears the station.

The sailors are put to flight. More trains arrive. The place becomes congested with troops. Their officers are completely in the dark as to the actual situation, and are obliged to get telephonic instructions from headquarters. Thousands of mutineers line the streets. Marching with iron tread, the companies of soldiers pass by. Machine-guns rattle over the paving-stones.

Not a voice is raised.

The Station Command, the Submarine Inspection Headquarters and the military prison are occupied.

More trainloads of machine-guns roll up. Enough to defend all the public buildings in the town.

Then something monstrous happens.

The Governor gives orders for the troops to withdraw.

Once again night falls on Kiel.

The streets are teeming with sailors, workmen, women.

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The last battalion of soldiers is drawn up in front of the High School.

To right and left the insurgents throng the sidewalks.

Brisk words of command :

" Load and slip safety-catches ! In fours right wheel, march ! "

Sinister silence broods over the scene. The revolutionaries stare open-mouthed at the front-line soldiers.

Their measured tread rings sharply on the paving stones. Above their grey steel helmets the barrels of their rifles gleam dully.

The columns of fours rumble by. The files of men. The companies.

Tramp of feet. Clank of metal. Uniforms. The machine-guns come rattling at the rear.

Song bursts forth into the night.

" Oh, Germany, Thou land of honour ! "

The close-packed throngs stand silent. Sullen faces. A single handkerchief flutters from a window.

The even tread of the marching columns dies away in the darkness.

" Stand steadfast, ye, in stress and storm ! "—the words of the song come floating yet out of the remote distance.

Kiel is delivered up to the insurgents.

* * * * *

The events at Kiel cast their shadow even in remotest Brunsbüttel. Agitation began first in the *Ostfriesland* and the *Posen*. The *Nassau* and the *Oldenburg* sent the demagogues packing.

In the afternoon the roads between Brunsbüttel and Brunsbüttelkoog were swarming with seamen of all categories. In the taverns and at the street corners the Red party leaders linked up with their comrades. The officers were abused and insults flung at superiors of all ranks. Ugly scenes occurred. The ratings from the

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ships were aghast at such spectacles. A Red courier arrived late in the evening, bringing fresh news from Kiel. He said nothing about the defeat of the insurgents.

Aboard ship the men were living in a different world. Not until after midnight was news brought to them by comrades returning from shore leave.

"Disturbances in Kiel—Encounters between police and sailors—Men killed and wounded."

Sleeping men were roused from their hammocks and a noisy propaganda began to enlist support for a mass meeting to be held at Westerbüttel on the evening of the fifth of November, with the object of forming a Soviet.

The Moloch of revolt was creeping ever closer.

RED FLAGS OVER KIEL

The fifth of November dawned grey and colourless over the naval port of Kiel. A low fog lay upon the sea. Now and then muffled noises from the ships broke through the unaccustomed stillness. The warships were in the throes of internal agony. The released mutineers had returned during the night. That shattered the officers' last remnants of authority.

A battleship.

The casemates a robbers' camp. Smashed packing-cases. Broken wine-bottles. Bread trodden underfoot. Drunken men lolling in the corners. The canteen had been broken into and rifled. No officers were to be seen.

Aboard the *Markgraf* also disorder reigned.

The mutineers were still half tipsy from celebrating their release on shore. They elected a new Soviet from among their number. The first was too timid for them.

Firearms were lying scattered about the lower decks.

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The wireless room, the bridge and the ship's office were besieged by swaggering crowds. But the officers' quarters still remained free from invasion.

Seaman Lämmel, in civil life an undertaker's man, had been carried away by this new experience, this unbridled liberty. He made speeches. He repeated the catch-words he had picked up. In his hand he was clutching an open tin of choice potted-liver, the last remnants of which he was scraping out with his seaman's knife. Meanwhile he went on talking between mouthfuls.

"The British ships have hoisted the red flag off Heligoland. The brotherhood of man is coming. Let us do the same as they have done!"

Thereupon Leading-seaman Claus Dierksen jumped up.

"That's a lie! I know the English. Hands off the flag!"

A dispute started. Threatening hands were raised against Dierksen.

"The men in the trenches have fraternised, too!" shrieks Lämmel.

"We don't need any Ensign!"

"Nothing but lies!" shouted Dierksen, planting his fists on the table. "Lämmel, if ever we see British warships, you'll get a good box on the ears from me for every ensign at their mastheads!"

All at once hundreds of ratings came rushing aft through the casemate. Lämmel, Dierksen and the rest were carried along with the mob.

"All hands on deck!"

A dark flood of seamen gushed through the hatchways. They scampered up to the quarter-deck. Ten pairs of hands clutched at the halliards. Something red was tied to it. The hatchway leading down to the officers' cabins was closed and barred.

A wild yelling. A stamping of many feet.

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The red flag fluttered up to the *Markgraf's* masthead.

On the *Bayern*, on the *König Albert*, on the *Grosser Kurfürst* and on the *Kronprinz Wilhelm* red flags were run up almost simultaneously. Here, too, the thing happened without a struggle, as by surprise.

Then the other ships followed.

Brief resistance on the part of individual officers. One against hundreds. The mass won.

It was towards eight o'clock. The cloud-draped sky hung comfortless and grey over the harbour.

The officer of the watch on board the battleship *Schlesien*, suddenly struck limp with amazement, stared at the ships of the Third Squadron. Quickly he raised the telescope to his eye. A red flag was bellying there. And that was *Markgraf!* His gaze strayed in vain from ship to ship. Everywhere he saw the red emblem. The petty-officer of the watch had seen, too. They looked at one another in dismay. Blood rushed to the sub-lieutenant's head.

That row a little while back. That shouting. So this was what it meant.

"Bo'sun," he said in a hoarse voice, "this is a flag parade!"

A group of naval cadets walked past. The officer of the watch turned and called after one of them.

"Cadet Harnack, report at once to the First Officer that the ships of the Third Squadron have hoisted the red flag!"

But the officers aft had already seen. Order to the officer of the watch: Cast off from the buoy. Make ready to put to sea!

Only one single bugle call among all those ships. The men on the upper deck of the nearest vessel swung round to gaze at the *Schlesien*.

The Ensign was waving proudly from her masthead.

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At the same moment the ship cast loose from the buoy and steamed seaward.

THE FIGHT FOR THE ENSIGN

The bugle call from *Schlesien* had an echo.

Far back in the shipyard, unable to move, there lay in dock a dreadnought that also hoisted the Ensign at eight o'clock.

König.

Leading ship of the main body of the High Seas Fleet at Jutland.

Commanding Officer : Captain Weniger.

First Officer : Commander Heinemann.

Staff Officer : Sub-lieutenant Zenker.

Naval officers of irreproachable character.

Mutiny here, too. The first rush for the flag was beaten off without bloodshed by the officers on guard.

The mutineers withdrew and elected a Soviet, which, after much hesitation, ventured aft.

The Commanding Officer was sitting alone in his office.

The Soviet councillors entered. Their manner was impudent and defiant. They brandished revolvers. Cigarettes drooped from their lips. Scornful glances.

Captain Weniger was sitting at his writing-table, his back to the door. For the space of a second his eyes scanned the disorderly rabble, and then he turned again to his work.

The councillors began to grow impatient.

" Provocation ! " exclaimed one of them. The Captain did not move a muscle. At length he rose to his feet. Turned round and looked each man straight in the eyes. Their cigarettes vanished. The men pulled themselves together, assuming a respectful attitude.

" What do you want ? "

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The president stepped forward.

"The red flag must be hoisted at once!"

Captain Weniger strode slowly and deliberately up to the man. The latter yielded step for step.

"No!" said the Captain. "I am in command of *König!*"

"Then we shall resort to force!"

"As you please!" Hand and eye ushered them imperiously towards the door.

He strode towards the retreating mutineers.

"As long as I am alive my ship shall fly the German Ensign!"

The cabin door slammed to, and the members of the Soviet found themselves outside.

The single Ensign fluttered defiantly over Red Kiel. The guards of officers were reinforced.

In the ship and close by on shore the mutineers were preparing to storm the vessel by force of arms.

The Captain, the First Officer, two lieutenant-commanders and several lieutenants were standing armed around the halliards.

Suddenly the sun burst through the lowering heavens, bathing in bright radiance the fluttering flag and the cordon of German naval officers.

There was a crack of rifle-fire. Bullets whistled past. Some of them struck the after-mast, others the deck. A fusillade followed. The attack had begun. Without cover or protection the officers faced the hail of bullets.

Sub-lieutenant Zenker suddenly flung out his arms. Then he collapsed without a sound.

Red blood trickled over the deck. His lips were set in a pain-twisted smile. His eyes, clouded in death, saw the victorious flag of Jutland flying above him.

Another exchange of shots. The officers stood steadfast as a wall. Lofty foreheads beneath the oak-leaves on

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their caps; cold, resolute eyes; lips pursed and grim. The bullets whistled thick and fast above their heads. They paid no heed. The firing ceased.

On shore the sailors carried off two wounded comrades.

The bullets began to fly again. From the shore and from two sides on deck. They whistled in the officers' ears. The Captain was hit. He stood inflexible. Riotous mobs of seamen were advancing under cover of the superstructures. Came the dull thud of a bullet. Almost lifted off his feet by the force of the shot, Commander Heinemann crumpled up. One of the lieutenant-commanders leaped into his place, and straightway sank wounded to the ground.

Nearer now came the crack of rifle-fire. The mutineers were bearing down from starboard and port. A dark wave broke over the officers. Two more bullets hit the Captain. Seamen fell before his fire. A leading-seaman grasped at the halliards. The Captain pressed his revolver against the man's body and shot him down. Then he himself collapsed, hit and badly wounded by a fourth bullet.

Once more German men had kept faith unto death with their flag. The deck was dyed red with their blood.

Over dead and wounded rushed the fanatical hordes. The Ensign fluttered down.

At the same instant the sun retreated behind the cloud-banks. Drab and desolate was the day.

The red flag ran up to the *König's* masthead.

THE MOB *VERSUS* THE U-BOAT HEROES

Leading-seaman Rüdiger was just leaving the house in which his commanding officer's apartment was situated,

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when he encountered in the vestibule a riotous mob of Red sailors and civilians shouting the name "Volker." Rüdiger hurried up the stairs. He removed the name-card from the door, and burst in a state of great excitement into the presence of Lieutenant-Commander Volker.

There was a noise of banging doors in the vestibule below.

"A mob of criminals searching for naval officers, sir," said Rüdiger. In a trice Volker had snatched up his Browning and dashed out on to the landing. Leaning over the banisters he shouted:

"Be quiet down there, or you will find yourselves in trouble! Out with you!"

He pointed his revolver menacingly at the disconcerted revolutionaries. Rüdiger stood beside him, also with cocked revolver.

"Get out!" shouted Volker, ready to go to any lengths; and he fired a warning shot. The intruders rushed out of the house in confusion. Volker and Rüdiger locked the heavy oak front doors behind them. Out in the street, the Reds quickly gathered more supporters. They laid siege to the house. Cyclists hurried off to fetch further reinforcements.

The two submarine men quickly prepared the flat to resist attack. Their weapons consisted of a Browning, two army revolvers and a carbine.

Lieutenant-Commander Volker opened the window giving on to the street and looked out. A howl of rage, a forest of menacing rifles, greeted the valiant submarine commander. Nearly two hundred sailors and dockers with women and children were standing below. A lively time was brewing.

Leading-seaman Friedrichsen was coming from the town to fetch his comrade Rüdiger. He saw the tumult, found out why the crowd had gathered, immediately

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turned down a side-street and ran as fast as his legs could carry him towards the harbour.

He reached the quay breathless, crossed over the two vessels alongside which the U. 241 was lying, and rushed up to the Chief Engineer, who was standing on deck. The alarm was given to the crew. A few extra small arms were fetched from the neighbouring hulk ; and then thirty submarine seamen and stokers, Boatswain Scholz, Artificer Hennig, the coxswain, the engineer and Sub-lieutenant Graf, armed with revolvers and carbines, set out at a run for their Commanding Officer's flat.

The situation there had grown more acute. The bloodthirsty mob fired blindly at the window, and Rüdiger was slightly wounded. They were obliged to abandon the window. The front door was battered down with axes. Aimless shots were fired in the vestibule. Then the flimsy door of the flat itself was shattered. The passage had been barricaded with chairs and cupboards. Volker and Rüdiger fired on the crazy rabble. Four men fell wounded and were dragged away. But twenty more pressed on behind. A grim combat ensued. At last the barricade was forced. A single door now stood between the two men and the raging mob.

At that moment the crew of the U. 241 came running down the street in extended line. Warning shots. The crowd below shrieked hysterically and took to flight.

The last Reds rushed in panic out of the house just as Sub-lieutenant Graf, Boatswain Scholz and Leading-seaman Schlager reached the door.

The street was cleared.

Two hours later the U. 241, with Ensign flying, cast off from the quay, followed by other submarines and several torpedo-boats.

Shots from the shore went whistling over the vessels as they went—shots aimed at the black-white-and-red

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flags fluttering at their sterns. Without a word the men on deck watched the insane spectacle. Bullets were splashing like pebbles in the water. Lieutenant-Commander Volker was not a little tempted to fire off one or two six-inch shells. The same thought was in the minds of Sub-lieutenant Graf and Leading-seamen Schlager and Friedrichsen.

"Full speed ahead!"

The engines hummed more loudly. Friedrichsort was passed, then Laboe. Red flags on the fortresses. Nauseating sight!

While the U-boats and destroyers were reaching the open sea, the insurgents had thrown the great boom across the bar.

Lieutenant-Commander Volker established wireless communication with the flagship *Baden* at Wilhelmshaven. They were told to await further orders in Kiel Bay. That afternoon the submarines and destroyers dropped anchor off the Island of Fehmarn.

A NIGHT SESSION OF THE BRUNSBÜTTEL REVOLUTIONARIES

Towards the eleventh hour of the night a secret meeting of Red agents in Brunsbüttel came to an end.

The light of the lamp struggled dimly through the thick swathes of tobacco smoke that floated like marks of interrogation above the heads of the Revolutionary Council of Action.

The place reeked of beer and brandy.

With much noise and declamation the last elements of resistance were swept aside by the serfs of the Red party leader, who sat there, expansive and well-fed, in the uniform of a petty-officer, gazing craftily in front of him.

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The Russian rouble carried all before it.

Two women shrieked in a corner.

Courage !

To-morrow we shall be victorious !

Next to the leader sat a corpulent civilian. On his other side a sailor who always wore an oilskin coat, and whom the men called " the Russian." He acted as the chief's adjutant.

There were many men there who had lived safe and sound through the long years of the war. The gaunt figures of a few seamen and petty-officers seemed strangely incongruous among them.

They did not appear to belong in this assembly. Yet beer-reek and smoke-laden air levelled all distinctions.

The fat civilian whispered something to the chief.

The naval artilleryman contorted his broad, almost Tartar face into a bestial grimace. He rose ponderously to his feet and appealed for silence.

" Comrades," he began, " do everything to ensure that to-morrow's meeting shall be well attended. We must recruit personally, by word of mouth. You know how much is at stake ! "

His audience could hardly see him through the cloud of tobacco smoke and alcoholic fumes.

" It is essential that we should keep pace with Kiel.

" You need have no fear, for, as our comrade here has already told us, our Government has forbidden the army and navy to shoot."

He paused.

Some sailors outside bawled to the rhythm from the adjacent dance-hall :

> " Out with the lights !
> Out with your knives !
> Catch him and cut him in pieces ! "

Then someone knocked on the window-pane. Several

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of the Reds looked up in alarm. The petty-officer quickly resumed his speech :

" Of course, the prohibition of shooting does not apply to us soldiers of the Revolution. So that whatever happens, we get the best of it. But we need not expect any resistance, for the officers are so drilled into obedience to authority that they will not make any move against us. Bitterly as I hate militarism, I welcome it in this instance.

" Yet if they should still dare to fight, we shall make short work of them ! "

He made a hangman's gesture.

" Small arms will be distributed to-morrow. We shall get reinforcements from Kiel, besides. So, to it, comrades ! "

Above the faint murmurs of applause, the scrape of chairs being pushed back, and the clink of glasses, the Russian shouted a final admonition :

" Our own men must be there well before the beginning of the meeting."

Slowly the room emptied.

Outside the wind was blowing showers of rain against the windows.

Through the pitch-black night three figures were groping along the sodden street behind a troop of uproarious sailors.

To their right gleamed the lamps of the lock. To their left the ships' lights emerged. Rain was falling ceaselessly, and their soaking cap-ribbons flapped in the faces of the three men.

" Are those the blokes, my lad ? "

" Did you get a good look at the leaders ? "

" A proper gang of scoundrels ! "

" A fine government we shall have if they get into power ! "

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They passed the *Oldenburg*. The officer of the watch was standing on the middle-deck.

Then *Nassau* emerged out of the darkness. Broad and angular the ship rose up before them. Her masts stood black against the rain-laden November night.

"What are things coming to, Gorch?" "The profiteers are in with those fellows!" "And the women!" "Bloody awful!"

One of the men spat angrily into the water.

Then they mounted the gangway, reported to their officer, and sought their hammocks.

THE NAVAL COMMAND REALISES TOO LATE

Wilhelmshaven, headquarters of the Naval Command, was still quiet.

The stage managers of the revolution were working astutely.

The *Kaiser Wilhelm II.* and the flagship of the Fleet, *Baden*, were subjected to a cross-fire of wireless messages, telegrams and telephone calls, both open and secret.

Warnings from Berlin: "No armed conflicts!"

Appeals for help from Kiel.

Urgent! Urgent! First Squadron, Brunsbüttel: Open revolt.

The officers in command of the active sections of the naval forces, the submarines and torpedo-boats, were pressing for energetic intervention.

The Imperial Government's general ban on shooting was the only reply to the grave representations of the Naval Command.

This criminal decree was communicated to the hard-pressed commands in the areas menaced by revolt.

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Thence came further despairing appeals.

Fresh trouble was breaking out.

Wilhelmshaven began to stir. Preparations for a strike in the dockyard. Secret meetings of the Independents. Agitation in the barracks. Renewed mischief-making aboard the warships lying in the harbour. Public assemblies.

The abyss yawned.

In sudden realisation of the danger, the Naval Command swung the helm over.

To ban shooting was not the way to quell the movement.

Plans for a counter-attack were co-ordinated aboard *Baden*.

The Naval Command was ready to act.

Too late!

TREACHERY ON EVERY SIDE

The revolutionaries, pursuing their ends by the subtlest means, were able to take advantage of the rigid military system of intercommunication. They already possessed their key-men in all important wireless stations, signal posts and telegraph offices. Sabotage of telegrams, mutilation of wireless messages. Suppression of important orders and communications.

Fortified by the news from Berlin and with the Government's ban on firing as their rear cover, on the evening of the fifth of November Kuhnt and Schneider gave the word for the attack to begin. The men coming on duty for the night shift in the dockyard went about their work dilatorily and full of inner restlessness.

To-morrow would be their day.

Wholesale treachery was brewing.

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Treachery surrounded the Emperor. Treachery lurked near the Naval Command. Treachery encircled the flagship *Baden*. Treachery brooded over the fortresses of Wilhelmshaven.

The Red spider had cast its web in close-spun strands over the North Sea and Baltic ports. From the local groups of Social Democrats and Independents the Red threads stretched out beyond the fortress commands to the naval and dockyard inspectorates, to the army authorities and the signal stations, to the secret clubs on board the warships.

And from the central telegraph offices these threads extended still farther—to Berlin, Hamburg, Cologne, Spa.

* * * * *

The leave-train from Bremen to Wilhelmshaven, *viâ* Varel, which was due to reach its terminus about eleven-thirty p.m., went rattling through the clammy fog of the November night. Broken windows, filthy carriages, unheated compartments and wretched lighting were conditions to which the passengers had long since grown accustomed.

The long war excused everything.

Leading-seaman Willi Schaaf was sitting with upturned collar in the corner of a third-class compartment.

At Varel a seaman of the dockyard division entered the compartment. He cautiously inspected the occupants and then fixed a contemptuous gaze upon the crescent on Schaaf's great-coat and on the ribbon of the Iron Cross. Twice he essayed a conversation, but the wearer of the decoration was a hard nut to crack, and this damped the dockyard sailor's revolutionary zeal.

The train drew up with a shriek.

"Wilhelmshaven! All change!"

The station was empty. Schaaf showed his leave-ticket to the sentry at the barrier, and passed through.

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Outside, he disappeared in the network of streets near the station.

An hour later he was snuggling down between the blankets in his bunk in No. 27 dormitory at the barracks.

TROUBLE IN WILHELMSHAVEN

The barracks of the Second Naval Division were plunged in darkness. Only the guardroom at the main entrance was illuminated.

Two men were lying asleep on a long bench.

The petty-officer of the guard was staring drowsily in front of him. All at once he jumped up and sprang to attention.

Captain Hickmann was standing before him.

"Bo'sun, rouse the warrant-officer and the drill instructors at once. The recruit divisions, too!"

Alarm!

Corridors, dormitories and landings of No. 2 Company were flooded with light.

Words of command, whistles, shouts.

"All hands turn out! Blue dress! Field kit!"

The barracks were loud with the movement of hundreds of hurrying men.

Arms and ammunition were distributed.

"All hands parade in front of the barracks!"

Leading-seaman Schaaf shouldered his way across the dark courtyard between the groups of men.

Words of command!

Fifty petty-officers and leading-seamen and one hundred recruits marched out to man the barrack gates on the morning of the sixth of November.

The five huge barrack buildings at Rüstringen formed, with the large drill hall, an immense square.

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They stood like massive, ponderous colossi, grey and sombre in the half-light of approaching day. The low-lying rain clouds seemed to graze the signal tower.

Gradually the brick buildings assumed their familiar red hue. The light was growing brighter. The sentries roused from their beds paced to and fro before the gates.

All at once they looked with questioning eyes from one to another. Something was missing.

They listened for something, they knew not what, just as a man listens when the clock in his room stops ticking.

"What's happened?"

"Everything seems so quiet."

At last one of them had it. "The dockyard!" he said.

That was it; the clamour of the dockyard, that hung day and night like a pall of noise over Wilhelmshaven and Rüstringen, was now stilled.

A seaman emerged from the Müllerstrasse and came running past the barracks.

"The dockers are on strike," he shouted, and dashed on excitedly down the next street.

Leading-seaman Schaaf was standing in a group with several petty-officers.

"The dockyard on strike!" "Now things are going to get hot here, too!" "Just let me lay hands on the blighters!"

The sound of shouting approached, tramp of feet, laughter. A disorderly crowd of workmen, sailors and marines came into view. A red window-curtain was drooping dismally from a pole.

The procession came to a halt at a respectable distance from the sentries' rifles.

Threatening fists. Spiteful glances. Shouts.

"Make way, you sheep!" "Silly boobs!" "Put down those guns!"

The sentries stood adamant, dark determination on their faces.

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They moved not an inch from where they stood.

The mob pressed closer. Wild threats and admonitions.

"They're not allowed to shoot!" "Give up the gate!" "Knock your officers down!"

Stones were thrown from the crowd.

Inflexible the sentries stood. Through the clamour sounded the captain's voice:

"Safety-catches forward!"

The foremost men drew hastily back. The leaders held a consultation.

Then the procession withdrew.

An orderly stood before Captain Hickmann.

Orders: "Withdraw the guard. Lay down arms!"

"Impossible!"

"It is an order."

A word of command sharp as the blade of a knife:

"Guard form fours!—Right wheel, march!"

From the gates, the detachments of the guard marched across the parade ground.

Mocking faces leered at them from the windows on either side.

Leading-seaman Schaaf nudged the man next to him.

"That didn't take long!" "What a grin those blighters up there have got!"

They passed by. Then again came the captain's voice:

"Deliver up arms and ammunition!"

Anger seized the drill instructors. What matchless mockery! They stuttered with rage as they flung their rifles in the corners.

"Let the Devil himself find a way out!"

In the side-streets off the Gökerstrasse were stacks of rifles. Waiting soldiers. Officers. Dismounted cavalry.

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Troops were crossing over the bridges of the Jade Canal.

Along the country roads from Neuenburg and Knip-hausen and Sande columns of men in field-grey were marching upon Rüstringen.

Ammunition wagons were rattling. Horses were snorting. Whips were cracking. Sharp rang the tread of marching men upon the frozen ground. The tip of the floating crane in the Imperial dockyard loomed like a distant phantom against the November sky. Through field-glasses a flag could be detected on the top of the crane. A red flag.

The loop-line station at Wilhelmshaven was crammed full of soldiers. Infantry, machine-gun sections, light artillery.

In the Jever, Ellenserdamm, Varel and Rasbede stations, troop-train after troop-train arrived.

From Osnabrück, Bremen and Oldenburg more and yet more transports rolled in.

A splendid muster of armed force.

Meanwhile, Rüstringen, whither all these troops are heading, was in the grip of mass-delusion.

The Marktstrasse and adjacent squares black with people. Red flags here and there. Orators addressing the mobs from motor-cars. Officers were roughly handled. Motor-lorries carrying machine-guns drove through the streets.

The Naval Command was deprived of all means of communication with the approaching troops.

When at last some officers in mufti succeeded in getting into the town, the troops were already with-drawing. As a result of telephonic orders to their commanding officers, forged instructions from the Naval Command and the Government's ban on firing, the Imperial troops had gone back again.

The fortress of Wilhelmshaven had been handed over to the Reds.

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RED FLAGS ON THE SHIPS

Like wildfire spread the news that the counter-revolutionary troops had withdrawn. The striking dockers formed a procession in the centre of the town.

Aboard the battle cruisers, battleships and light cruisers lying in the harbour and in dock, the crews forsook their quarters *en masse*. Throngs of stokers, seamen and petty-officers came crowding across the gangways. Nothing could hold them back now; thousands of men streamed over the Kaiser Wilhelm Bridge into the Roonstrasse and marched in serried ranks into the town.

In the dockyard close-packed crowds of men from the light cruisers, drifters and torpedo-boats converged upon the dock gate. It was locked. Marines, police, firemen were guarding the exit. Hundreds pressed on. Thousands. The guards were shouldered aside and disarmed. The crowds battered on the great iron door until it flew open with a crash. Wildly cheering, the multitude rushed out into the street. Loud hoots of triumph. Fresh bursts of cheering as the procession from the town came winding down the Gökerstrasse. Red flags. Music. Singing:

"The Internationale
Unites the human race!"

The gates of the big barracks were wide open and unguarded. The music of a brass band suddenly blared forth. The head of the procession marched through the gate. The bellowed strains of the Internationale reverberated from the red brick walls of the barracks opposite. The crowned eagle of stone that spread its protecting wings above the barrack gate looked down menacingly upon the seething mob. In a few moments the spacious square was thronged—the very square whose soil most of those sailors had nourished with their sweat years ago as raw recruits. Kuhnt, the dockyard clerk, addressed

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them. Comrade Schneider addressed them. But there was little to be gleaned from these speeches. The same hackneyed phrases over again. Then, suddenly, there was a burst of frantic applause in front near the speakers. Tempestuous cheers swept over the crowd. The drill instructors, standing aloof, pricked up their ears. Leading-seaman Schaaf gave his neighbour a nudge.

"What was that he said?"

"The British navy has hoisted the red flag!"

"What bloody liars!"

The speeches were over. Hundreds of men invaded the buildings. A disorderly mob gathered in front of No. 5 barracks. The warrant-officer of the Fifth Company had planted himself firmly before the entrance.

Tumult. Heads. Fists. Butt-ends raised to strike. Trampling the warrant-officer underfoot, the rebels streamed up the stairway.

Soviets were elected.

A red curtain was hoisted by way of a flag over No. 8 barracks. The crowd marched onward.

* * * * *

The flagship *Baden* was lying moored to the quay-side. Admiral von Hipper was making one last effort to control the course of events. As far as possible, all officers and those warrant-officers, petty-officers and men who remained loyal had been ordered aboard the *Baden*.

But this proved a fatal step.

The mutineers, returning about this time to their ships, found them completely emptied of loyalists.

Derfflinger, the huge battle cruiser with fifteen-inch guns,* secondary and light artillery, flaunted her mighty armament to the drab November day.

From her flagstaff the Ensign was flying.

* This is an error. *Derfflinger's* big guns were 12 in.—*Trans.*

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Below decks the mutineers were electing their Soviet. Then the last act unfolded itself here, too.

Hundreds of men hurried to the upper-deck and rushed aft.

The emblem of the Empire fluttered down, was trodden underfoot.

The red flag rose in its stead.

Aboard the other ships the same thing happened.

And last of all it happened in the flagship *Baden*.

ORDERS FROM SHORE

In Schillig roadstead lay the battleships *Thüringen* and *Helgoland*. In the Ems estuary the light cruisers *Köln* and *Königsberg* and the Eleventh torpedo-boat half-flotilla.

Leading-signalman Meyer, on duty at the central signal station at Wilhelmshaven, was short of something to do.

So he signalled to Schillig station :

" Call outpost ships. Order them to raise anchor immediately and come home."

Schillig signal station transmitted the command.

Thüringen and *Helgoland* raised anchor and steamed up the Jade.

The outpost zone was left without a ship.

The cruisers and torpedo-boats guarding the Ems did not move. Captain Harder, commanding the *Königsberg*, and Captain Kaulshausen, commanding the *Köln*, had seen through the bogus signal.

Aboard the battleships *Thüringen* and *Helgoland* order reigned once more. Steaming at half-speed, the vessels approached the lock.

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Completely in the dark as to what had been going on ashore, the ships entered the lock. It was a trap.

Consternation and alarm.

" Wilhelmshaven has gone Red ! " shouted someone from the lockside.

Without assistance the battleships manœuvred into the harbour. Sepulchral silence everywhere. Work had ceased in the Imperial dockyard.

The officers looked despairingly from one to another.

On a public building, a red flag. Yonder, between the masts, more red flags.

" Has everyone gone mad here ? "

" Why, we could have put an end to this business from the roadstead, with our fifteen-inchers ! "

" And now we're properly done for ! "

The ships made fast in the great harbour. From the mastheads of the cruisers near them red flags were flying.

The revolutionaries came aboard. The officers withdrew aft.

Election of a Soviet. Hauling down of the Ensign.

Two more bloodless victories for the revolution.

THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER IN BRUNSBÜTTEL

On the morning of the fifth of November a copy of the *Hamburger Zeitung*, containing an account of the happenings at Kiel, was going the rounds of the men's quarters aboard *Nassau*.

From mess-deck to mess-deck, from hand to hand the newspaper was passed ; for it was the only one that had reached the ship.

This printed sheet scored a direct hit. It had an utterly devastating effect upon a section of the crew.

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" Revolution ! "

The word leapt through the open door of the warrant-officers' kitchen and went shuddering through the ship.

Max Kache, the warrant-officers' cook, shouted it excitedly into the port casemate.

Jonny Friedrichsen, also a cook, preserved his habitual silence as he stood beside his animated colleague. Kache was quite beside himself.

" Revolution ! " he shouted again.

" And are you pleased about it ? " asked someone from the casemate.

" He's an Independent ! " " You hash-slinger ! " " Shut your mouth ! " " Karl Bosslett, who had the job before you, was not one of your sort," came a chorus of abusive shouts.

He slammed the door in a rage. They would come to him by and by, begging for their food. Then he mumbled something to himself about " never knocking any sense into their heads," and applied himself to his work once more.

Jonny Friedrichsen looked at him wide-eyed, thought of his beloved Hamburg, and began to whistle the refrain of the ropewalk song.

Lieutenant Rüger was just about to leave his cabin whan Leading-seaman Schmidt entered.

Quickly he closed the door and drew the curtain.

" Well, Schmidt, how goes it ? "

" Badly, sir, if we delay any longer."

Then he recounted in a whisper what had been said at the meeting of the Revolutionary Council of Action the night before. In quick, staccato phrases he outlined the programme :

" Big meeting at the ' Corner House ' in Westerbüttel to-night.—Soviets to be elected.—Revolutionaries to be issued with arms.—Officers repudiated. Besides this,

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there are Fourteen Points to be put to the Commanding Officers."

"Just like Wilson," thought Rüger, unwittingly putting his finger on the starting-point of all the disloyal agitation. Then he asked, "Were you able to find out the names of the leaders?"

"Not for certain. One of them is called Zörstiebel, or something like that. There's another one they call 'the Russian.' A party secretary from Hamburg, in mufti, was there, too. He said that the Reichstag Deputy Dittmann would speak in Hamburg on the fifth, that's to-day, and then revolution would break out there, as well."

So it had got as far as that. Rüger could not understand what the Squadron Commander was thinking of. Why did he delay any longer?

Schmidt went on:

"The Reds are relying on the Government's ban on shooting. They think the order ties the officers' hands; and, sir, this fellow had the cheek to say that the Admirals would obey all right."

Rüger's face flushed and paled alternately. What a shameless game these scoundrels were playing! Regaining his calm, he asked:

"What is the feeling in the ship?"

"For the present the men are quiet. But there may be a swing-over at any moment, if outside influence gets to work and the captain doesn't do something."

"Thank you, Schmidt. More of this later. We shall be seeing one another again. Are you going ashore to-day?"

"No, sir."

Then both men left the cabin.

Twenty minutes later Lieutenant Rüger was standing in the presence of his superior officer.

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He had just reported to him the reliable information received as to what was happening ashore.

For some minutes neither spoke. To Rüger it seemed an eternity.

At length came the question :

" And what is your idea of the steps we ought to take ? "

" No further shore leave. Make it absolutely clear to the crew that we are going to take drastic action if there is any trouble. Then send fully-armed shock troops ashore—but only picked, reliable men. Arrest the ring-leaders. Events will show what else is necessary. I will put myself under your orders at once, sir, to carry out this expedition."

" And if the insurgents defend themselves ? "

" Then we must fire on them ! "

A knock at the door. A seaman entered and reported :

" The Commanding Officer wishes to see you, sir."

The hours dragged by with torturing slowness.

Every time a boat came back from shore and every time there was any noise on deck, Lieutenant Rüger looked out apprehensively.

The Squadron Commander must have made his decision long ago. But nothing happened.

He simply could not comprehend this attitude of procrastination. He forced his thoughts into other channels.

He tried to write a letter.

But his hand refused to hold the pen.

Then he opened a book, taken at random from his shelf. It was the last volume of " A Struggle for Rome."

There were some lines of verse on the page. He read them out aloud :

> " The coward wins ; the hero falls ;
> And faith and valour fly.
> Foul knaves are masters of the world.
> Up, Goths, and let us die ! "

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This, surely, had been written expressly for the present day.

The significance of that last line might escape many people. But not him.

He knew.

The vision came back to him, blinding in its vividness.

Germany fighting for her life. Great was the peril, deep-rooted the corruption.

And foul knaves were taking advantage of this desperate situation to snatch power for themselves.

That would be the end. Chaos. For the enemy would bleed Germany white.

Once again the question seared his heart :

" What of the Kaiser ? "

While on leave he had heard so many strange things. Evil things. The Kaiser under the thumb of advisers of foreign extraction ? Could such a thing be true ?

And that U-boat commander, back from Kiel, who had been talking to them in the station hotel last night. What was it he had said about the circumstances of Ludendorff's dismissal ? How was the conversation supposed to have gone ?

The Kaiser :

" Now I shall build myself a new Empire with the help of the Social Democrats ! "

Whereupon Ludendorff had replied :

" Then within a fortnight your Majesty will no longer be German Emperor ! "

Rüger shook his head. People said so many things. The burden now rested upon the lower ranks.

He went up on deck determined to do all that lay in his power to combat the insurgents.

* * * * *

The Squadron Commander in *Ostfriesland* was face to face with a difficult decision. Far more difficult than the

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one he had faced six days earlier in Schillig roadstead. He knew that ashore all signs were pointing to storm. Only by a brutal application of force could the revolt be crushed, and the position was becoming hourly more serious.

Radio telegram to the Naval Command: a report on the situation.

Orders from Wilhelmshaven: "Avoid conflicts!—No firing, by order of the Imperial Government!—Otherwise act according to discretion!"

The officers were pressing their captains; the captains the Squadron Commander. Repeated consultations. Suggestions.

"Act on our own responsibility!"

"Crush the revolt!"

"Success will be our justification!"

Inquiries made at the Supreme Command at Altona revealed that all was quiet there. General von Falk himself spoke on the telephone.

At Lockstedt Camp, Neumünster, Rendsburg: all quiet. Only in Kiel and this corner between Brunsbüttel and Cuxhaven had trouble broken out.

Another urgent radio message to the Naval Commander-in-Chief.

But no answer came. Wireless communication had been broken.

Precious time had already been lost. Fresh alarming news came from the shore. The Squadron Commander made his decision. He ordered:

"Ready to put to sea at nine o'clock!"

"Ready to put to sea at nine o'clock!"

"Thank God we are going to get out of this infected place!"—"High time, too!" thus ran the conversation in the officers' mess aboard *Nassau*.

"If it is not already too late!" broke in the excited

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voice of Lieutenant Rüger, entering the mess at that moment.

Everyone looked up.

"Ah, Comrade Rüger, you take too black a view," reproved the Second Gunnery Officer.

"Or too red a view," added Sub-lieutenant Meyer ironically.

Rüger ignored this last remark. His whole mind was on the events of the moment.

"In Westerbüttel they are electing Soviets and repudiating the officers. The men are grumbling because they are not allowed to go ashore."

The diminutive Sub-lieutenant von Frankenberg leapt up, suddenly pale, and shouted:

"But this is revolution! The people have betrayed us!"

Terror concealed itself behind expressions of surprise. So it had come to this.

"Impossible!"—"Is that a fact?"

"Yes, gentlemen, it is a fact!" The voice of the First Officer of the watch, who had entered the mess as Rüger was speaking, rang out with cruel harshness.

A babel of excited voices filled the room.

More and more officers kept coming in.

Last of all the First Officer and the Captain.

Now something would be done, thought Rüger, heaving a sigh of relief.

OPEN REVOLT

Westerbüttel was in open revolt.

All men of the warship crews who had come ashore that afternoon assembled for the appointed meeting. Most of them had been drawn by mere curiosity.

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Hundreds of seamen and stokers poured into the "Corner House." Here and there petty-officers were to be seen in the crowd. The assembly room was full to overflowing.

Outside the tavern an equally numerous crowd was seething. Snatches of oratory that came floating through the windows along with clouds of tobacco smoke were greeted with applause. Uproarious cheers and laughter filled the tavern. The speakers were working up their audience to boiling-point.

"All power to the Soviets! Down with the officers!"

The Russian raised his fat hand. In the half-light of the platform his silhouette looked like a gallows.

"If they resist us we shall know how to deal with them! There is plenty of room on the yard-arms!"

There was a disturbance. A signaller from the *Ostfriesland* was elbowing his way through the serried ranks of the audience.

Swift questions. Stupefying answers. Curses.

"The ships are ordered to sea!"

The petty-officer leapt on to the platform, and yelled to the crowd:

"The fight has begun! Fall in outside!"

Eyes sullen and full of hate glinted in pale faces as the men thronged out into the dark street.

They kindled one another's ardour with savage cries. The Russian seemed to be everywhere at once, arranging the order of the procession.

"Shock troops in front!"

The lighted windows shed a faint illumination on the scene. There was a gleam of rifle barrels. The men who were armed were pressing to the front of the crowd.

Then the procession began to move. The tramping feet had a muffled sound in the evening darkness.

Pale faces were pressed against the panes of unlighted

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windows. A thousand-footed monster was crawling through the town. Heading for the harbour.

Armed patrols which had been sent out from the ships to bring the crews back on board came face to face with the head of the procession at the second bend in the road.

In a trice the three petty-officers and six leading-seamen from the *Posen*, *Nassau* and *Oldenburg* were surrounded by men armed to the teeth.

Sinister faces glared angrily at them.

" What are you after ? "—" Are you mad ? "

Rough hands seized them, unbuckled their belts, took away their bayonets.

" Get to the end of the line ! "

The patrol from the *Nassau* tried to slip away to one side. " Halt ! " shouted the leaders of the procession. Leading-seaman Seyfert went on running. Bullets whistled through the darkness. The men were caught and disarmed.

" Come on, you're going to march with us ! "

Utterly bewildered, Seyfert looked around him in the ranks, gazing from face to face. Only when a cigarette glowed could he distinguish the sullen countenances, distorted by hatred. For the rest, there were only great-coats thrown open, upturned collars, caps pulled over the wearers' eyes.

" The password is ' Liberty,' " came a message from the front of the procession.

The Russian detached two hundred men and led them off along the Brunsbüttel road. It did not take them long to break into the anti-aircraft magazine and seize small-arms and ammunition. Then they went on unchecked to the fort near by.

With the butt-ends of their rifles the insurgents battered down the door. They dragged out pistols, rifles, two machine-guns and more ammunition.

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Onward swept the marauding band.

To the prison.

The sentries were taken by surprise. The prisoners were set free.

Scenes of fraternisation. This meant a valuable reinforcement for the night's work.

" ' Liberty ' is the password ! " they shouted.

The occupation of the signal stations and telephone exchanges was a mere formality, for they were already in the hands of revolutionary comrades.

Then they saw a great vessel approaching the lock. Those at the head of the procession watched her massive outlines drawing closer.

A messenger rushed up, shouting for the leader.

Breathless and excited, he broke the news :

" The *Posen* has already passed the lock ! The *Oldenburg* is just going through now ! "

The procession came to a halt.

The leaders shouted to one another. Then the petty-officer bellowed :

" Occupy the lock ! "

Twenty, forty, one hundred armed men rushed forward, advancing at a run towards the lock.

It was quickly occupied. The lock-keeper was compelled to yield to force of numbers.

In this turmoil the disarmed patrols slipped out of the procession to one side and tried to regain their ships by a detour.

The dark, menacing bulk of the *Oldenburg* was towering in front of the lock.

The crack of rifles. Rapid fire. Bullets spattered against the searchlight deck. Those fellows on board weren't allowed to shoot, so we might as well have a pop at them. This was the only bit of war we were likely to see. There was something to be said for a little revolution.

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" Draw your fires ! "—" Turn back ! "

Then the incomprehensible happened.

The mighty battleship, with her twelve-inch, six-inch, and three-point-five-inch armaments, with officers and crew aboard, yielded to a few rifle shots.

Not even the shadow of a gun replied to the insurgents' fire.

Frantic cheers from the lock greeted this first victory for the revolution.

" That came off fine, my lad ! "

* * * * *

Aboard *Nassau* the officers were gathering their forces for energetic action at the eleventh hour.

The upper-deck was crowded.

Men were standing about everywhere, talking excitedly in groups.

Officers and warrant-officers were mixing with the ratings. Most zealous of all was Lieutenant Rüger. A nucleus of stalwart seamen stood loyally by his side.

At nine o'clock the *Posen* cast off and passed through the lock to seaward with only half her complement on board.

Since neither the men on shore leave nor the patrols had returned, the *Nassau's* gangway was shipped.

The look-out men paraded for inspection.

There was a loud roaring in the funnels.

Ready to put to sea !

The *Oldenburg* passed her to port, and disappeared in the direction of the lock.

Suddenly comes a great crash from the *Ostfriesland.*

A terrifying yelling and whistling sound through the darkness. Bellowing, screams. Then silence once more.

" *Nassau,* heave to ! "

" To the anchors on the forecastle ! "

Deathly stillness in the *Nassau.*

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Everyone is listening tensely for some sound from across the water.

All at once there is the sound of shooting. Crackle of rifle fire.

" It's at the lock ! "

Cheers emerge out of the night.

The groups aboard the *Nassau* rush to the forecastle.

It is twenty minutes past nine.

Something dark and massive is coming back. The battleship *Oldenburg*.

A searchlight's beam gropes over the water.

Morse signals flash out.

" Lock occupied by insurgents ! "

The *Oldenburg* steers past the *Nassau's* sternpost and makes fast on the other side, next to the *Ostfriesland*.

The *Nassau's* upper-deck is black with men. The " all hands " whistle shrills abruptly through the ship.

" All hands aft ! "

Once more the crew stand united around their Commanding Officer.

Then three cheers " for Kaiser and Empire " ring out to Heaven.

For the last time the Captain inspects the active service watches.

Then comes the command :

" Clear the guns ! "

The guns are cleared for action.

A look of quiet satisfaction is upon Lieutenant Rüger's face as he reports turret " Fritz " cleared away.

Now at last they mean to act.

At half-past ten several figures emerged beside the *Nassau* and hailed the sentries.

They were members of the disarmed patrol.

Without delay they were taken aboard.

Leading-seaman Seyfert was describing the happenings

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ashore to a group of comrades ; and Lieutenant Rüger, who happened to be standing by, once more heard the truth from the lips of a simple rating.

" Even this afternoon there was still time to have arrested the ringleaders ! "

He frowned wrathfully and nodded his agreement.

Midnight was approaching, but no one thought of sleep.

Things were only just beginning to get lively ashore.

The *Ostfriesland* brought her searchlight into action, illuminating the road beside the canal.

In the far distance, where the shaft of light melted into the darkness, shadows were emerging. Moving figures could be seen. The noise of shouting floated over the water. Little by little a long procession of seamen detached itself from the night.

It came to a halt in front of the *Ostfriesland*.

A few moments later the first armed men appeared on the upper-deck.

Shouts, whistles, yells.

Part of the phantom procession ashore advanced farther, towards the *Oldenburg*.

All at once the middle-deck was lighted up. Figures hurried across the gangway. A dark flood of humanity gushed over and invaded the whole deck.

The night was rent with noise.

Aboard the *Ostfriesland* and the *Oldenburg* men were coming and going, shouting and laughing.

Shadows crossed the path of the searchlight.

There were hand-to-hand fights. Shots rang out. Hysterical screams. Dire tumult.

The scene caught at Rüger's heart. He was moved to the very depths of his being.

He knew that the *Nassau's* crew would be unsettled by what was happening across the water.

Nothing could reassure them again.

They heard the clamour rending the night.

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It was open revolt. There seemed to be no vestige of authority left there. The searchlights showed them sailors, wearing the same uniforms as themselves, reeling about drunken and unbridled.

Rüger turned to the officer of the watch and said :

" Can you understand why no one seems to be offering the rebels any resistance over there ? "

" Resistance ! Who is there to resist ? " was the reply.

" Damn it ! Aren't there any officers there ? "

The officer of the watch shrugged his shoulders.

" What would you have them do ? "

" Suppress the revolt without mercy," answered Rüger. " The fate of the country is at stake ! "

As though to mock his words, laughter and shouts and bursts of song floated across the intervening space.

All was wild confusion over there. Infernal spirits were loosed from Hell. The orgies of a Witches' Sabbath filled the night.

Two strokes on the ship's bell.

One o'clock in the morning.

Little by little the clamour subsided.

The sentries at the guns fell asleep.

Towards four o'clock, without any order being given, the active service watch left their posts. It was like the gradual extinguishing of a flame.

And on the bridge the signallers on duty were receiving their first orders from the Soviet in command of the squadron.

Dark and silent lay the officers' and warrant-officers' cabins aft.

Dark and silent lay the casemates.

The heat in the compartments was oppressive, despite the open hatches.

The slumbering men were breathing irregularly, by fits and starts. A man cried out in his sleep. Another

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cursed some figment of his dream. The turmoil they had witnessed was still simmering in their minds.

Yet not all were sleeping after the alarms of that night.

Figures coming from between-decks emerged one by one into the forward battery, crouched down, and crept under the hammocks aft.

They seemed to be carrying some burden which they stowed away in the corner of No. 6 action station on the port side.

Two men kept watch there as sentries.

From the bottom of the ship, too, other men were dragging heavy objects. Then a head emerged from the hatchway between-decks.

"Here, Gorch! August! Lend a hand!"

Elongated objects were handed up. Cases. Smaller packages. Everything found its way to the dark corner.

For the space of a second a torch illuminated the spot.

Rifles, army revolvers, sword-belts, cartridge boxes, ammunition lay piled together there. A tarpaulin hid them all.

Then the men lay down, and soon their regular breathing betrayed a deep and wholesome sleep.

The tumult of the infernal visitation was long since silenced, but the sinister deeds of that night still lay like an incubus over the scenes of revolt.

Thin wisps of fog drifted wearily over the *Nassau's* bridge; gathered like veils about her masts, and formed fanciful shapes in the air. Over the waters of the harbour the fog thickened to form grey clouds. But yonder, where it rose against the sides of the ships lying opposite, it gleamed white as snow and twinkled like the fluttering of innumerable handkerchiefs.

November fog.

As full of treachery and malice as the words of the Red revolutionaries.

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The sound of a dog barking came from the adjacent shore.

There was a loud shout somewhere. Laughter. Then once more the eerie stillness of the night.

The few men on the bridge shivered.

All at once a searchlight flashed out across the harbour.

Flashlight signals struggled hazily to pierce the gloom.

It was a call from the flagship *Ostfriesland.*

Could it be intended for the *Nassau?*

Muttering, the signaller acknowledged the call. Duty was duty.

"Orders for Wednesday, the sixth of November. All men granted leave with the exception of the watch division and a stokers' watch. Blue uniform.—
The General Soviet."

The men on the bridge were startled. They began whispering and muttering to one another.

"So they're beginning to give orders already!"—"The Soviet!"—"God knows what sort of riff-raff that may stand for!"—"Thilo, tell 'em to go to Hell!"

The signaller promptly transmitted the message. Then they went on talking.

"What a gang!"—"All men granted leave!"—"A cunning lot!"—"Bait your mouse-trap with a bit of cheese!"—"And we're the mice!"

Below, the messenger clattered down the iron steps of the companion; he was passing on the order to the officer of the watch.

The morning of the sixth of November crept drab and cheerless over Brunsbüttel harbour.

The two battleships, *Ostfriesland* and *Oldenburg*, which were completely dominated by the Soviet, disgorged thousands of men, who marched in close ranks towards Brunsbüttel.

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Aboard the *Nassau*, too, the men were early astir.

The Soviet's " order " had been disseminated throughout the ship. But the majority of the crew either temporised or refused to take any notice. Only a few seamen and stokers emerged in blue dress. The old agitators were stirring again already. They sniffed the morning air and set to work at their old game, this time with increasing success. Meanwhile a long blue serpent was winding its way from Brunsbüttel towards where the *Nassau* lay. Roll of drums. Snatches of band music borne by the wind. Closer and closer drew the insurgents' procession.

The bands struck up the " Old Comrades " March. Hundreds of voices took up the chorus :

" My husband is a sailor ;
A jolly bo'sun he.
But I don't live a widow's life
When he has gone to sea ! "

The band had to play it over again. Time after time the crowd bellowed out the trite and meaningless lines.

Thousands were marching in the procession. It was all organised like a Socialist children's treat.

At the head, a blare of trumpets. Next a few red signal flags on poles.

Idolatry.

Behind, the sheep-like children in blue. Petty-officers and warrant-officers among them, destroying their future by their own actions.

The wardroom officers are assembled in the mess. They have argued long enough about non-essentials.

Lieutenant Rüger is pressing for action.

Now they *must* act. Otherwise the wave of revolt will swamp the *Nassau*, too.

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Precious time has been wasted, even in the last few hours. But it is not yet too late.

Rüger speaks in harsh and urgent tones.

" Get control of the secondary armament. Send an ultimatum to the assembled rebels. All those thousands are not yet bound by any united will. They are still at sixes and sevens among themselves. One good shot will knock sense into the misguided masses. Then we must attack on shore. Arrest the ringleaders. I have everything ready. The small-arms are in the hands of members of the crew who are still trustworthy."

Ominous silence. Is there not one among them who will stand by this courageous young brother-officer in his demand for resolute action ?

There is ! Approval and applause.

But what now ? The insidious monster creeps upon them, crippling their resolution. Cold, bloodless, realistic objective.

Lieutenant-Commander Wiersbitzky speaks.

The First Officer addresses them.

Doubts are raised. " Ifs " and " buts " are put forward. Lieutenant Rüger's brow darkens. These familiar countenances seem to him all at once empty and meaningless.

He starts up in horror.

A dreadful clamour from outside rings through the ship. As from a gramophone, cheers sound mockingly in the room. Distant music. The Torgauer March. And through it all a voice, hollow, toneless. Like a sentence of death.

" We must wait !—We cannot act without orders from the Squadron Commander !—Shooting is forbidden ! "

Rüger can stand it no longer, He jumps to his feet. All his bitterness against this senseless order wells up in his heart.

" The revolution is threatening the Throne ! We have

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taken an oath of allegiance to the Emperor. For us there is but one command : to combat the use of force with every means in our power ! "

He does not stay for an answer.

He swings abruptly on his heels, and slams the door behind him. With a firm step he goes up to the quarter-deck, and gazes calmly upon the wild disorder of the insurgent mob.

" Just one detachment of shock-troops from the front, and we could wipe out the trouble in half an hour ! " he thinks, heedless of the threatening fists raised against him.

Shoulder to shoulder stand the serried crowd before *Nassau*.

The great battleship, last rampart of loyalty, dominates the canal.

No gangway is put out.

But the insidious " no shooting " order paralyses resolution here, too. The guns remain motionless. The Commanding Officer cannot make up his mind to any measures of defence.

Weighed down with care, Captain Reklam buries his face in his hands. This accursed " avoid conflicts." He shakes a wrathful fist against those responsible for such orders.

Let the silk-hatted politicians in Berlin try to do it themselves ! He would just like to see them ward off armed attacks without provoking conflicts !

Meanwhile the issue is being resolved for him outside.

The crowd on shore is gathering force with every moment.

An angry clamour fills the air.

Aboard the *Nassau* more and more men in blue uniform come up on deck. They are out for leave. Nothing more than that.

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There is still something dividing those in the ship from those ashore.

But the Russian is getting tired of waiting.

" Three cheers for our comrades of the *Nassau !* " he shouts.

The thousands roar their response. The red flags, hanging limply from the poles, belly out for a moment. Fists, rifles, pistols are brandished above the sea of blue caps.

Then a voice on board :

" Three cheers for the Soviet ! "

Comes a cracked echo for reply. But the spell is broken. Music blares forth below.

With joyous shouts the gangway is dragged out.

A gang of armed men rushes over it.

" ' Liberty ' is the pass-word ! " they yell across the deck.

" Liberty ! " echoes from the mess-decks and casemates below.

This is an easier conquest than when the suburban mob of Paris stormed the Bastille. Without one gesture of resistance the mighty battleship is abandoned to the rebel invasion.

Sailors from the other ships, with red bands on their sleeves, hasten through the casemates. Scenes of fraternisation take place.

But no one ventures aft.

The bands of rebels rush past No. 5 casemate, come up against the closed bulkhead door, disperse.

Some forty armed men are there, guarding the guns and waiting for orders from Lieutenant Rüger.

Armed with hand-grenades, stalwart sentries of forbidding mien are guarding the entrances.

Presently the noise subsides and the compartments are vacated.

Left to themselves, the ratings have joined the

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procession and marched off to the assembly ground near by.

Lieutenant Rüger went to No. 6 casemate.

Never had he been upon a more bitter errand.

There were some forty men there. Ready to serve willingly a lost but honourable cause. How was he to explain the officers' conduct to these simple ratings?

Schmidt came out to meet him.

Rüger held out his hand. There was an unspoken apology in its clasp.

His face was very grave as he said:

"The Command can do nothing without sanction of the Officer Commanding the Squadron."

One or two of the men were carried away by righteous indignation. Not endearing were the epithets flung aft.

Rüger made no comment. The men were right.

Schmidt promised that they would nevertheless stand by one another and hold themselves in readiness.

Then Rüger grasped each man's hand, and went with aching heart to his cabin.

Looking out shortly afterwards, he saw the forty men marching in faultless order towards the assembly ground.

Things there happened as he had prophesied they would.

Hopeless confusion.

No united will, even among the leaders.

They managed to formulate their demands more or less without dissension.

But the flag question wrecked almost everything.

The gunner petty-officer exhausted all the artifices of his trade union training. It was no use. The Russian goaded the crowd with a revolutionary harangue, but he came up against opposition when he broached the question of the flag on the ships. Many of the men

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began to hanker for their dinner and drifted away before he had finished speaking.

The proceedings began to drag.

Suddenly there is a burst of wild alarm.

A report: "Troops on the march!"

The Russian breaks off his oration. Shouts to the armed detachments. Black fanaticism sits upon his brow.

He picks out forty, sixty, eighty, a hundred men.

"Load and put back safety-catches!"

At the double. To St. Margreten. For thence came the report.

They run along the railway line towards the station.

Houses emerge out of the distance. There is nothing suspicious to be seen. Just before St. Margreten a branch line runs off. A train is coming along it. The Brunsbüttelkoog line.

The train draws closer.

The sailors point excitedly as it approaches at low speed.

Men in field-grey can be clearly distinguished at the carriage windows.

"Deploy to the left!"

Warning shots are fired. The sailors run obliquely towards the train.

Still it comes on.

The rifle-fire is intensified.

Double-quick!

Whole volleys roll over the fields of Holstein.

The train comes to a standstill. Men in field-grey alight from the carriages.

Over hedges, ploughed fields and ditches run the sailors.

Cheers ring out across the plain.

The two armed forces fraternise.

An hour later a train runs into Brunsbüttelkoog bearing

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three hundred infantry, several army officers, twelve new machine-guns and a wagon-load of ammunition, guarded by insurgent sailors.

* * * * *

Violent clashes of opinion continued after the men had returned on board.

The battle of the flags raged on.

The Ensign—or the flag of commerce.

And in the background the flag of piracy threatened to eclipse both.

The forty armed men headed by Schmidt stood steadfast as a rock.

They were for the Ensign.

Their presence was enough to sober the hot-heads. Unobtrusively they had occupied the approaches to the officers' quarters.

But for the rest they were condemned to inactivity.

The afternoon hours dragged endlessly on.

Lieutenant Rüger sat brooding in his cabin.

Despite the wrecking of his hopes, his heart was now full of the suspense and expectation of a last great decision.

He avoided the mess. His brother-officers there were hoping for a miracle.

Almighty God ! How should a miracle happen, when no one was prepared to take any step to mend the situation !

Here they were in the midst of a revolution, and yet went on believing with maddening obstinacy in the inviolability of old Germany.

Lieutenant von Richthofen had left the revolutionary zone in mufti, with the object of fetching relief troops.

That was something, to be sure ; but it had only condemned to inaction those who would otherwise have helped themselves.

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And now the officers were dutifully awaiting the liberators.

It was enough to drive one to distraction.

He struck the table a thunderous blow with his fist. Then he got up and went to look for Schmidt.

It was growing dark outside.

* * * * *

The rebels were in high spirits at the headquarters of the Supreme Soviet.

They felt themselves masters of the situation.

Telegrams were exchanged with Kiel. Resolutions passed. New demands put forward.

An orderly burst into the room.

" Report from the station garrison at St. Margreten ; Armoured train captured. Crew come over to our side ! "

Pompous as field-marshals, they recorded the bloodless victory. Then the sitting proceeded.

One anxiety still troubled the chief ringleaders : the officers.

There were too many ratings who would prefer to obey the orders of their officers rather than those of the Soviets. Something must be done about it.

Then there were some queer fellows who, in the name of " liberty," dared to oppose the Soviets . . . fellows who actually resented any discipline whatever.

Well, well ! What do you say to that ?

And some of these were just ordinary sailors.

I *beg* your pardon !

Aboard the *Nassau* someone had written in chalk on the side of turret " Dora :"

> " And he who sang you Freedom's lay
> Is now the man you must obey."

That was what lots of men were saying.

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Especially those men in the *Nassau*, that reactionary gang.

They'd just about spoiled the whole show.

So the only thing to be done was to scare the masses into action.

Time was pressing.

" Comrades ! Our patience is at an end. The officers, those nigger-drivers, those . . . ! "

" Hang 'em ! " shouted an interrupter.

" The officers are going to blow up the ships ! "

" Great God ! "

That had gingered them up like a bombshell. A brandy bottle tumbled off the table and smashed on the floor.

Everyone jumped up in terror.

The counter-attack must be beginning already. Damn it all ! So much excitement and alcohol, and so many sleepless nights may well make one a bit jumpy !

It was some little time before the alarm subsided. Then revolutionary valour returned.

" Down with the aristocrats ! "

" I demand the immediate arrest of all the officers ! "

" A revolutionary tribunal ! "

The cry was meant to act as a trumpet call, but it had the opposite effect.

Most of the members of the ships' Soviets blenched at the thought.

There was a disturbance at the doorway.

Three men with tattered uniforms, their red sleeve-bands torn off, their faces battered, reeled into the room.

The assembled rebels leapt to their feet. Questions. Answers.

" What's happened ? " " They look as if they'd been knocked about a bit ! "

" Encounter with a U-boat crew ! "—" A frightful shemozzle ! "—" Twenty against a hundred ! "—" Good God ! "

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The generalissimo's voice broke through the clamour.

" Orderly ! "

" I want ten picked men ! "

Then he hurried out of the room.

" The officers are going to blow up the ships ! "

This scare ran like wildfire through the lower-decks of the three battleships that evening.

Many men who had hitherto been apathetic were roused by it from their indifference. Without pausing for reflection they took sides against their officers.

Large numbers made haste to get ashore. One could dance in Brunsbüttel. That was better than stopping here and being blown to smithereens.

" These scoundrelly officers ! "

The men hurried past their superiors with their hands in their pockets.

The salute had been abolished.

That decree, at any rate, one could comply with.

But for the rest, the Soviets might go to the devil.

PANIC

Night.

Ashore, there is dancing in almost every hall and public room.

Most of the ratings have left their ships.

The battleship *Ostfriesland* is plunged in the most profound nocturnal silence. Suddenly a cry rings out :

" The officers are going to blow up the ship ! "

A shadow glides swiftly onward. Forward, between-decks, the same warning cry.

Suddenly, abruptly, it bursts upon the sleeping brains.

The revolutionary sailors leap from their hammocks.

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" Officers." That is the spectral terror standing before their sleep-intoxicated eyes. Bewildered and with nerves on edge, they jump trouserless into their sea-boots, snatch up their things and scramble up the hatchways on to the deck. They rush past the sentries posted by the Soviet, drag them along too, and stream ashore over the gangway.

One of the men has snatched up the red flag instead of his trousers. The banner waves like a symbol above the crowd of half-naked revolutionaries fleeing precipitously along the deck.

A heap of human bodies is writhing at No. 2 hatchway. Members of the Soviet. Roused out of their drunken slumber, they are shoving one another up on deck.

" Get out ! " yell four voices at once.

" Heave ho ! "

And another body rolls on to the deck.

" They are going to blow the ship into the air ! "

" An airship ! " babbles the man already halfway through the hatch, and promptly vomits in the face of the comrade pushing him from below.

" Filthy swine ! "

He lets go. The body gives a list. All three fall crashing back into the casemate.

Cold, shivering, some of them barefoot, many clad only in their shirts, they rush panting to gain the safety of the shore. The red flag waving over the mob.

Then, out of the darkness, comes a burst of uproarious and malicious laughter.

" You idiots ! Is that how you're going to make your triumphal entry into Berlin ? "

Shamefaced, inwardly raging, held up to merciless ridicule, the half-clad sailors go back on board.

* * * * *

Panic among the crews.

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The Executive Committee of the Soviets is planning revenge.

An hour before midnight the order goes out to the ships' Soviets :

" Arrest all officers immediately. Put them ashore under guard. Further instructions follow by envoy of the Executive Committee."

Warning reaches the officers just at the same time as the alarm is given to the crews.

Once more the *Ostfriesland* is snatched from her nocturnal peace.

Junior officers prepare their quarters to resist attack.

Indignation. Wild excitement.

The Commanding Officer and the Squadron Commander are assailed with a storm of questions.

The Admiral calls for silence.

" What is the matter now ? " he asks.

And then : " I will see the President of the Soviet."

With a bodyguard of armed men " the Russian " hastens to the Squadron Commander, as representative of the Executive Committee.

Oily, defiant, insolent is the subordinate's behaviour.

Cold and haughty is the Admiral's manner. He looks straight past the man as he speaks.

" You have been granted all your demands. What more do you want ? "

" There's a secret crew. Intrigues by the officers. They are trying to blow up the ship ! "

The man stares at his superior officer as though he would leap at his throat. Then he takes out a document and hands it with ostentatious ceremony to the Admiral.

In a mocking voice he says :

" The People's Court of Justice is already in being. The officers are to be sent in a body for trial at Brunsbüttel. Make the necessary arrangements."

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In the *Oldenburg*, too, the officers' quarters are barricaded.

From the bridge of the *Ostfriesland* a signal is sent out to the *Nassau* and *Oldenburg :*

" Squadron Commander has approved removal of officers. Comply immediately."

Bewilderment.

The escort approaches.

Resistance. Blows with the butt-ends of rifles. The men rush the barricade. A shot is fired. Panic among the ratings.

Orders from superiors. The officers withdraw. Ten minutes later they are being escorted one by one across the gangway.

* * * * *

Meanwhile all is profoundly silent aboard the *Nassau*.

The President of the Soviet, Engine-room Artificer Rehbein, is not in the ship. Two other members of the Soviet refuse point-blank to carry out the order.

" I'm about fed up with the whole bloody swindle ! "

" They've got megalomania, that's what is the matter with them ! "

Cursing, they go up to the bridge. The signallers there have already received an inquiry from the *Ostfriesland* asking whether the officers are now under arrest.

" No," flashes the reply. " No one aboard the *Nassau* is prepared to arrest them."

" They'll send another gang on board to us ! What then ? "

" We must chuck 'em out ! "

" Can you understand what the officers are about ? "

" No."

" No more can I."

" Come, let's find Schmidt. There's one decent fellow left, anyhow ! "

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They go below. In No. 2 casemate amidships they run up against Seaman Cramer, emerging from one of the flats.

" Do you know where Schmidt is ? "

" Yes ; I'm coming along, too."

Sea-boots are projecting from the hammocks. Fully dressed, with their weapons by their side, sleep the " loyalists."

" Schmidt ! Get up ! Quick ! "

He leaps up truculently, grasping his rifle.

He gazes in bewilderment at the two Soviet members.

What can *they* be wanting of him.

In a few seconds they have explained the situation. Schmidt understands.

" If they send men from outside, we must undertake the removal of the officers ourselves."

" Cramer, quick ! Wake König, Müller, Litzmann. You know the right men. Half a dozen are enough."

It is nearly midnight.

On the middle-deck of the *Nassau* appear a horde of men, armed to the teeth, drawn from the Executive Committee's Red Guard.

" We'll bring our own officers ashore. There's no need for any of you to go below decks, explains Schmidt.

Below, Cramer and one or two companions are going from cabin to cabin.

Calling by name to the Captain, the Lieutenant-commander, the Lieutenant, Sub-lieutenant Meyer, the Chief Engineer, and the rest :

" Get up ! Put on your clothes ! Fall in beside the ship ! You are under arrest, by order of the Supreme Soviet."

Lights are switched on in the cabins. Brief resistance by one or two of the officers. Resignation.

The captain's office remains in darkness. A broken man is sitting there. Hysterical sobbing shakes his

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frame. Snow-white hair glints in the darkness. Turned white in a single hour.

" The Squadron Commander has given his sanction ! "

He cannot believe it. The disgrace is more than he can bear.

For a long time he weeps silently, inward tears. Then all at once he stares wide-eyed towards the cabin door.

A vision.

Lieutenant Rüger is standing there. His noble face is as though carved in white marble. He salutes.

" Leave of absence, sir ! "

Somewhere in the distance, two sharp reports. Like full-stops.

The figure crumples up. Slowly the Ensign, with the Iron Cross on the black-white-and-red ground, descends to drape the lifeless body. Vanished. Only the white cabin door remains.

LIEUTENANT RÜGER'S DEATH

Lieutenant Rüger slowly opened his eyes.

The little cabin was in darkness.

Outside, heavy steps were hurrying along the narrow alleyways. Doors were flung open. Peremptory voices spoke.

Then all was quiet once more.

None of this seemed to have any concern for him. Mechanically he closed his eyes again.

When he opened them once more he found himself looking at a narrow ray of light. He sat quite calmly gazing at this bright streak. He went on looking absently; his eyes hurt. The band of light became broader and broader, and then turned again to darkness.

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Once more he closed his eyes. He wanted to think. But he could not.

Had he fallen asleep? Yet there he was, sitting fully dressed on his bunk.

What did it mean?

Strange, there was that streak of light again.

Slowly he raised his head.

A figure was leaning towards him through the narrow doorway, and a voice said:

"Lieutenant Rüger, it is time!"

He passed his left hand over his forehead.

There was something there that prevented him from thinking.

Again he looked up.

Darkness was spread before him like a black curtain.

For a second time the voice spoke.

"Fall in beside the ship!"

Resolutely he squared his shoulders.

Who the devil was that, who dared speak thus to an officer of the Imperial Navy? Fall in—eh?

He was about to retort sharply to this insubordinate conduct when the recollection of what had happened a few hours before burst suddenly upon him, dark and shapeless.

He looked up. So that was it.

His brain was working with perfect precision now. The weight had been lifted from his forehead and temples.

There in front of him stood Seaman August Cramer, of the Imperial Navy, a native of Gotha in Thuringia; a rifle was in his hand. This Cramer was a decent fellow. Why wasn't one of the ringleaders standing there? Had it been one of them, Rüger would have knocked the man down without hesitation. But he merely said. "I'm coming, Cramer."

Then he was alone.

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Bitter pain clutched at his heart.

The end was at hand.

Unshakeable within him was the resolve never to tread this path of shame.

His hand felt for the revolver in his pocket.

Let them all bow to fate. Let them find a thousand excuses for their action. Let them give formal proof of their blamelessness.

The oath of allegiance !—The honour of an officer !

These were conceptions that brooked no temporising.

He strode rapidly out of his cabin. Heedlessly he pushed aside the gaping sailors. Then he hurried up on deck.

Rigging and cables hung motionless beneath a sky glittering with stars.

It was a cool, crisp November night.

The Red Guards were swaggering insolently about the middle-deck.

" Ha, ha ! That one still holds his chin in the air ! "

" There's a haughty fellow for you ! "

As he set foot on the gangway his sword knocked against the iron support of the hand-rail.

Grimy hands reached out to snatch from him this most precious possession of an officer.

Rage and disgust welled up within him.

With a mighty blow he sent one man reeling back, and then struck a second assailant between the teeth.

" You curs ! " he flung at them.

Wild confusion ensued.

Rifles and revolvers were levelled at him. Safety-catches clicked back. The red beast smelt blood.

Twenty, thirty, against one.

But in the face of danger the young officer drew himself up to his full stature.

His Nordic figure stood a head taller than the pitiful rabble of his assailants.

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Like a rock pounded by surging seas he stood there, his dauntless face turned defiantly to the slobbering mob.

Blood-shot eyes were staring at him from beneath low foreheads.

He could see that such men must needs hate everything that was fine and noble.

Two utterly different worlds were facing one another.

In the space of seconds a drama was enacted.

He resolutely unbuckled the ceremonial sword.

" My Emperor gave me this sword. I shall not allow it to be defiled by traitors ! " he shouted to the rabble ; and straightway flung the sword into the sea.

Opening his tunic, he bared his breast to the menacing rifle-barrels.

" Shoot me, you cowardly gang of traitors ! "

Disconcerted, they lowered their weapons. The mass-man cowered back with a snarl, struck as by an invisible fist.

Lieutenant-Commander Wiersbitzky, who set foot on the gangway a moment later, spoke soothingly to him.

But Rüger stared past the other officer and held his peace.

Then, hesitantly, he began to descend the gangway step by step. Respectful silence mingled with the surrounding darkness. The faint crackle of the search-light could be distinctly heard.

He raised his eyes.

And as he looked at his brother-officers and superiors standing there in the merciless circle of light, all the bitterness and all the shame of that midnight hour came home to him with redoubled force.

He passed his hand over his eyes.

It was no phantom of the imagination.

In rank and file stood all the captains, commanders, lieutenant-commanders, chief engineers, lieutenants and engineers.

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The Emperor's officers !

Lined up by order of some despicable Soviet.

The whole world of authority, of duty, of leadership was shattered within him at a blow.

His knees trembled. But only for a moment ; and then his old steadfastness returned to him.

Now he was standing on the quay.

He looked coldly at the men beside him. They seemed strangers to him, their faces unfamiliar.

Without speaking he walked past. It was as though he was holding a review. There was the First Officer, then the Second Gunnery Officer, then Sub-lieutenant Meyer, and at the end of the line the tear-stained face of little Sub-lieutenant von Frankenberg. Strange. Were they lined up in order of stature, or according to rank ?

He would like to have been certain on that point, so that he might be able to tell " Old Fritz " up there.

Purposely he took his stand in a place aloof, thus drawing the final line of demarcation between himself and them. For even on board ship he had always stood alone.

He looked darkly down the long line of officers.

Then Leading-seaman Schmidt stepped up to him and whispered something. He gazed long at the loyal man, then grasped his hand impetuously. It was like a leave-taking.

" Schmidt, I must go back on board ! "

And at once he began to mount the gangway, step by step.

His mind was working deliberately. Proudly, unflinchingly, he trod the path of death. For him it was easier than the path of shame.

For the last time he gazed upon the clear, starlit heavens.

His breast was heaving.

For the last time his eyes beheld the mighty contours of the *Nassau*.

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Like huge crosses the masts and yard-arms rose into the darkness.

There was the forward bridge. Then the shelter-deck amidships.

The heavy artillery turrets.

A fierce agony was burning in his heart.

Finished. All finished.

Time seemed to stand still.

He was walking between two eternities.

Would not the bridge break under the mighty burden he was bearing back into the ship? Would not the masts fall, uprooted by the violence of his tread? Was there no obstacle barring his path of sacrifice?

None.

He walked unhindered down the narrow alleyway aft.

Unhindered he entered his cabin.

Germany was plunged in night.

And here, too, was night.

But yonder there was a light. Into its circle came all those he had loved.

His mother, with reproachful eyes. His father, sternly admonishing. His brothers, questioning. Then a bright and lovely figure. A girl's eyes rested imploringly upon him. And last, but not least, his Captain.

Then the vision melted away, and harsh reality returned.

No Rüger is a coward! I will keep faith!

"My Emperor!"

The hoarse cry of a dying heart was quenched abruptly in the crack of two shots.

As he fell, he seemed to see a tall figure in field-grey stretch out supporting arms. The grave, kindly face of his beloved father bent over him, and in the honest eyes he read the knowledge that his father understood this deed.

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The revolver shots rent the silence of that fatal November night.

A frantic commotion broke out on the upper-deck. The searchlights went out. The Red sailors bellowed like maddened cattle, knocking one another down in their haste to get ashore.

It was some time before pale faces began to peep out of the dark hatchways and take stock of the situation.

When the searchlights blazed out again, only the ranks of officers, with Schmidt, Cramer, König and Nolting in front of them, were still standing beside the ship.

Far away in the distance the Red liberators were fleeing across the meadows and ploughed fields. .

It was a night of dread.

A wind had suddenly sprung up. Ghostly clouds were drifting over Brunsbüttel. The stars were loath to look upon the nocturnal procession of officers, marching under escort of rebels, to the Revolutionary Tribunal.

Jeers. Insults. Blows with the butt-end of rifles.

The prisoners silent in their despair.

History will never know again so bitter a procession to Golgotha.

A REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL

A dance hall.

On the platform a vehmic court.

Black cowls, lights, a death's-head.

The judges : the leaders of the revolt.

The Public Prosecutor : the Soviets.

In the body of the hall, the accused. A whole camp of naval officers. More than two hundred of them.

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Officers from *Ostfriesland*—Officers from *Oldenburg*—Officers from *Nassau*.

These last have just arrived. They squat down on the floor like the rest, sitting on blankets they have brought with them.

In the corners, along the walls, at the entrances, stand armed sentries. A machine-gun is mounted beside the main entrance. Its barrel points menacingly into the hall. But the machine-gunners are not at their post.

It is close on three o'clock in the morning.

Three officers from each ship, those of senior rank, are made to come forward to answer the charge.

The indictment has fallen under the table.

The Executive Committee feel their enthusiasm ebbing. All these officers seem to be having an unpropitious effect.

The rebels are getting tired.

They play their final trump card.

" The ships will hoist the red flag this morning ! "

Then they display their magnanimity.

To the senior officers they assign bedrooms in an hotel, with a sentry guarding each door.

The rest are marched back under escort to their ships.

* * * * *

On the morning of the seventh of November the *Nassau* is flying her Ensign at half-mast.

No one knows by whose hand it was set.

There is a dead man on board.

Eight o'clock in the morning.

The red flag is run up on the *Ostfriesland*.

The red flag is run up on the *Oldenburg*.

Without a struggle.

Only on board the *Nassau* a final scene occurs.

Arms with red sleeve-bands are lifted to haul down the Ensign.

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Three men rush up.

Leading-seaman Schmidt snatches the halliards.

Then he shouts across the deck :

" In honour of the late Lieutenant Rüger, attention ! Haul down the flag ! "

The men are silent. None dares to hinder Schmidt.

Swiftly he draws the flag to him and carries it below.

He is sobbing as he spreads the sacred pall over Lieutenant Rüger, officer of the Imperial Navy, who fought at Jutland and who died for the honour of this flag.

On deck, they are running up the red banner.

The Corps of Officers retort with a gesture.

They leave the ship.

The Commanding Officer leaves his ship.

Two warrant-officers, Gunner's Mate Hundsdörfer and the Boatswain take over control by order of the Soviet.

Men, petty-officers and warrant-officers all rebel against the red flag.

At three-thirty it is hauled down and the black-white-and-red flag of commerce run up in its stead.

The officers return to their ship.

THE WANDSBEKER HUSSARS

On shore, an inexplicable wave of alarm had suddenly swept over the insurgents, terrifying even the leaders.

The Wandsbeker Hussars were reported to be marching on Brunsbüttel.

Frightful tales of horror heralded this cavalry regiment, which, in point of fact, had never left its barracks.

All armed ratings were detailed for picket duty outside Itzehoe and St. Margreten.

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At Itzehoe a picket consisting of thirty men was housed in a barn belonging to a farmer.

The men lounged about the streets. The population maintained an attitude of indifference.

The pickets on duty strained their eyes in looking for the Wandsbeker Hussars.

Evening was approaching.

Suddenly the pickets craned their necks, fumbled with their rifles, gave the alarm to their comrades and stared to leftward across the field, as though spellbound.

Yonder, quite two miles away, ran a road. The trees that lined it stood out clearly against the light background. Along this road was riding a peasant, returning homeward from his work in the fields. The clear-cut silhouette looked in the twilight like a hussar on horseback.

The thirty men went on staring at this phantom, unable to believe their eyes.

That was the only horseman the insurgents' pickets had seen. His appearance was promptly reported by telephone to Brunsbüttel.

When evening arrived and the promised rations were not forthcoming, the pickets commandeered butter, bread, sausage and bacon from the peasant women, writing out chits for what they took :

> " Received 2 lbs. of butter.
> Signed on behalf of the Soviet commanding
> *Ostfriesland.*"

After fortifying the inner man, they marched back without orders to their ships, leaving behind them various rifles and accoutrements.

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FORMATION OF THE SUPREME NAVAL SOVIET

Through the wide-flung doors of the ballroom in the largest of Wilhelmshaven's places of amusement flock the representatives of the Sovereign People.

Seamen, petty-officers, warrant-officers as delegates from the ships' Soviets and the dockyard and seamen's divisions. Men in field-grey as representatives of the Marines. Civilians. Trade union secretaries. The Red agents. Suspicious faces, dark figures, criminal types among them.

Armed men everywhere, their rifles held muzzle downwards. They are the shock-troops organised by the Independent party leaders, Kuhnt, Schneider and Schlegel. By dress and bearing the majority of the Soviet members make plain their resentment against all things military. The platform is still untenanted.

Leading-stoker Bernhard Kuhnt, sitting in an adjoining room with his comrades, casts one more glance over the roll showing the distribution of his forces—a distribution he prepared months before down to the minutest detail. He laughs spitefully to himself. The stage is set. Now it is time to let the people into the theatre. The leaders take their places unobserved. Three times the bell rings vainly for silence. At length the noise subsides. Kuhnt declares the congress open.

He is sitting more firmly in the saddle than Artelt at Kiel.

From the beginning he had eliminated the Social Democratic opposition, and he had been highly successful in roping in the majority of the non-political sailors. His oration now is a short one, culminating in the phrase :

" Formation of the Supreme Soviet ! "

Thirty names are read out.

Kuhnt wears an expression of deep gloom. His system

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runs directly counter to the democratic principle of election by the people. But what else can he do ?

In Wilhelmshaven he, as an Independent, held the power in his own hands, and he had dealt effectively with attempts by Social Democratic members of the Reichstag to deflect the course of the work he had begun. Artelt had been less successful at Kiel.

The Supreme Soviet of Workers, Soldiers and Sailors thus elected proceeds to hold a short session forthwith. Kuhnt is unanimously chosen as first President. The administration is working splendidly. Now they can get things done. The first President lays before them a list of twenty-one names : the Council of Twenty-one. Then five names : the Council of Five.

He himself remains for the time being the Council of One.

Comrade Schneider, promoted Chief Press Officer, announces the result of the Soviet's deliberations. With a cheer for the International, the Congress then comes to an end.

* * * * *

In Kiel the Social Democrat Noske had queered the pitch for the Independents. The party leaders in Berlin had prevented the appointment of Admiral Schroeder, because they well knew that the Lion of Flanders would have ruthlessly restored order in Kiel. Seaman Artelt had played his part, and they had no more use for him. The unquestioned authority of the officers had been broken. That was enough for the present.

In Wilhelmshaven the main body of the Fleet was lying in harbour. Ship alongside ship. In double file, because there were not enough berths to go round. From all the masts red flags were hanging. A strange spectacle which was not without its effect on the people.

For the crews things had changed little.

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The officers—men with certain abilities and educational attainments, when all was said—had been superseded. In their place were established Soviets whose members had proved their fitness for such office by their propensity for shirking and by their prominence on the ships' crime-sheets.

Someone must be in command, after all. Whether it was Admiral von Hipper or Leading-stoker Kuhnt was not immediately apparent in the first confusion of revolt.

The mass of the crews went on carrying out orders.

In this respect things had really not changed at all.

THE NINTH OF NOVEMBER, 1918

Berlin.

A strong force of reliable troops, equipped with artillery, trench mortars, machine-guns, armoured cars and aeroplanes, had drawn a cordon round the centre of the city. The authorities were determined to use firearms if necessary.

The munition workers on strike paraded in front of the cordon along the Canal. With that the Red march on the centre of the city would have come to an end.

But here, too, the incredible happened. The loyal troops and police were withdrawn in compliance with a telephonic order to their officers. None knew who gave the order.

It seemed that the German people were doomed to be destroyed by these anonymous orders.

* * * * *

The Chancellor of the German Empire, Prince Max of Baden, is alone once more. Harassed and bewildered,

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he looks about him in the room. The telephone rings. He starts up abruptly. Lifts the receiver. His eyes start out of his head. As though under the spell of some invisible power, he sits there at the telephone. A weak "Yes" is wrung from his lips. There is a confusion of distant voices on the wire. The lines have got crossed. "But that's rank treachery!" sounds distinctly above the faint humming of the wires. He gives a convulsive start. Mechanically he replaces the receiver.

His Imperial master is at the headquarters of the Supreme Command. And Spa is a long way off.

Through the streets are marching the supporters of his political friends: Social Democrats and Independents. Berlin is delivered up to street terrorism.

This hour can never be recalled.

Though he knows it to be false, he announces that the Kaiser has abdicated. The Crown Prince renounced his right of accession to the Throne.

The door opens. Ebert and Scheidemann enter, the envoys of the Social Democratic party.

* * * * *

Philipp Scheidemann, still Imperial Secretary of State, pushed his way through the crowded corridors of the Reichstag to the front steps.

Outside surged the mass-wave upon which he and others had floated to power.

He raised his right hand appealingly.

"Silence for Scheidemann!"

Engine-room Artificer Harder was standing hemmed in among the excited crowd. He had walked into the arms of the procession and been carried along with it. So that fellow up there was one of the new men. The gesticulating figure looked like the Flying Dutchman. All at once Harder received a violent shove. Hands snatched at his cap.

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" H.M.S. *Nassau* " was written on it in golden letters.

" There is no ' H.M.' now ! "

Spiteful eyes glinted at him. The tattered cap-band floated away over the crowd, which suddenly fell silent as the orator began to speak.

". . . the German Republic ! "

The mob roared madly. Then came Scheidemann's voice once more.

" The people have been victorious all along the line ! "

The rest was drowned in one great tumult of joy.

The extremists were standing in crowds before the Imperial Castle.

Karl Liebknecht, the Spartacist, was indulging his vanity. From the historic Corner Window he was feeding his enthusiasm and the enthusiasm of his followers with the victory of the Revolution.

Then, as an outward sign of that victory, he had the red flag hoisted upon the cupola of the Imperial Castle.

And what of the Kaiser ?

Urged by Groener and Hindenburg, he was speeding in a car, accompanied by a few loyal friends, towards the Dutch border.

Head bowed and shoulders bent, he sat in brooding silence.

So this was the end.

There had been no lack of men to warn him. Time after time this had been foretold.

He counted on his fingers. Twenty-seven, twenty-eight, twenty-nine, thirty, thirty-one. Five.

His adjutant, Lieutenant-Colonel Niemann, looked at him uncomprehendingly.

" To-day is the ninth of November, isn't it ? "

" Yes, Your Majesty."

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The Kaiser resumed his calculation. Nine, plus five, equals fourteen. The image of his Field-marshal, Ludendorff, was before his eyes. He heard the voice again distinctly.

" Then within a fortnight your Majesty will no longer be German Emperor ! "

His chin sank upon his breast. Never had prophecy been fulfilled with such terrible exactitude.

The car slowed down. The blue-white-and-red frontier posts emerged ahead.

He gave the order to stop. The chauffeur removed the miniature Imperial Standard from the radiator.

Slowly the car moved off, carrying into exile the Supreme War Lord and the Grand Admiral of the German Fleet.

THE LAST TORPEDO

While these events were happening at home, Submarine B. 50 was making an even course through the Mediterranean. At her stern fluttered the German Ensign. She was one of the sixteen U-boats on their way back to Germany from the Adriatic harbours. The crew were squatting on deck. Their Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Kukat, in their midst. In the uttermost distance two rocks rose out of the sea, towering corner-pillars dividing the two hemispheres.

The Rock of Gibraltar and Monte Simia. Abruptly rising. Leaving a narrow gateway between. The Straits of Gibraltar.

The sea was deep blue. The silhouettes of the two rocky promontories stood out but faintly against the sun-drenched sky.

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Suddenly, smoke ahead. Two slanting plumes. Masts and funnels rose above the horizon. A warship.

B. 50 dived. Only the periscope showed above water. Lieutenant Kukat took note of the rapidly approaching vessel. Fighting-mast. Two funnels. Two double turrets. A British battleship. He compared the vessel with the illustrations in "Weyer's Pocketbook," and identified H.M.S. *Britannia*.

The periscope disappeared for a moment or two.

Change of course.

"Raise the periscope!"

Kukat's eyes were glued to the eyepiece. Light. Foaming water. Above it the dark grey sides of the ship, menacing guns, sentries on guard. The ship was cruising obliquely across their bows. Get ready! Now her stern was passing the line of sight that ran vertically through the eyepiece. Now!

The U-boat heaved; the torpedo was off.

Aboard the other vessel men suddenly started scurrying across the decks. The siren shrieked frantically: "Torpedo track to port!"

Desperate orders: "Hard a-starboard!"

The armoured giant veered ponderously. Too late!

A mighty detonation. A foaming and spurting as of immense fountains. Fragments flying in all directions. Bursting clouds. Exploding boilers. Masts swaying and falling. Steam and flames burst from the funnels. Lifeboats. Wreckage.

H.M.S. *Britannia* was swallowed in the deep.*

The last torpedo fired in the Great War had found its mark.

* The suggestion of instantaneous destruction here conveyed is an example of the author's poetic license. Actually, H.M.S. *Britannia* remained afloat three and a half hours, most of the crew being saved. —*Trans.*

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THE REMNANT OF THE HIGH SEAS FLEET STEAMS OUT FOR THE LAST TIME UNDER THE ENSIGN

Meanwhile.

British light cruisers are heading for the German Bight. From their halliards waves the Union Jack.

They find the first German outpost stations untenanted.

The look-out men in the crow's nest of the leading ship have a clear view far around.

They shake their heads. So it must be true, then, that the German Fleet has mutinied.

Meeting no obstacle, the British ships press forward.

They have long since reached the base of the "Wet Triangle."

The leading ship turns to westward. The others veer likewise a few points to starboard. Then they head south, out of sight of Heligoland.

An airman whose daily duty it is to scout over the grey quadrants between Borkum and Sylt sights the enemy as he rises from Borkum. Shortly afterwards the wireless waves are quivering through the ether. In vain they tap out their message in the wireless rooms of the German battleships. In vain they seek to reach the flagship. The war is over for the High Seas Fleet.

Only the vessels lying off the Ems mouth—the light cruisers *Köln* and *Königsberg*, the Eleventh Torpedo-boat Half-flotilla, and the destroyer B. 98—raise steam.

Bathed in bright sunshine, these last loyal ships steam through the North Sea.

Defiantly flaunt their Ensigns in the wind.

From the upper-deck of the light cruiser *Köln* Petty-officer Philippsen looks out over the agitated sea. Pitch-black clouds of smoke are eddying in the wind, to drift swiftly away aft.

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The ship is quivering and shuddering beneath his feet.

The *Königsberg* is leading. The speed-cones descend even below the yard-arm.

All at once the wind begins to strum more loudly on the rigging.

"Full speed ahead!"

The waves raise higher their foam-capped heads. Darker grows the blue-green of the North Sea. Philippsen's eyes are riveted on the limitless horizon, searching, searching.

He notes in vivid detail all the incidents of this advance. Perhaps he guesses that it is to be the last.

The slender ships race furiously westwards. So great is the speed of the torpedo-boats that sometimes only their masts and funnels are above water.

The captains and officers are standing on deck. They are ready to meet death in battle, to go down with Ensigns flying.

But the horizon is empty as before.

The poor remnant of the German High Seas Fleet races along the line between Borkum and Sylt at a speed of twenty-eight knots. Then the ships advance to westward, and after four hours' cruising turn back and head for home. But slowly, as though hoping that the reckoning may yet come.

Instead, devastating news reaches the wireless room. The stations at Nauen, Poldhu, and the Eiffel Tower break in upon one another: The Kaiser fled.—A Republic proclaimed in Berlin.—The Western front in full retreat.—Severe fighting and heavy losses.

Without uttering a word, the officers go below.

The petty-officers sit silent in their mess. Men of the old school. Joachim, Philippsen, Menge; Chief Petty-officer Kahl.

They dread this homecoming as something wholly evil.

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Towards nightfall the last ships to fly the German Ensign cast anchor in the Ems.

* * * * *

At Brunsbüttel the struggle for the command had been resolved.

The officers had been completely deprived of power. They were interned in their quarters aft. Armed revolutionaries guarded every exit. No officer was allowed on deck.

Order of the Soviet commanding the First Squadron :

" Ready to put to sea at one o'clock. Raise steam for fourteen knots. Ships going to Wilhelmshaven."

The flag of commerce was hauled down.

In its place the red flag was hoisted once more.

Under the superintendence of the coxswains and chief petty-officers the ships passed out of the lock. " The red flag must be flown until we have passed through the lock and left Cuxhaven behind," declared the Soviets.

The manœuvres were accomplished without a hitch.

The *Ostfriesland*, the *Oldenburg* and the *Nassau* groped slowly out into the open sea. Mighty ships of war, totally devoid of power to fight.

The flag of piracy was struck.

The Ensign was run up.

A sense of weariness pervaded every compartment of the ships. The majority of the crews were already conscious that they had been fooled.

The vessels passed the Outer Jade light-ship.

Flashing signals ahead in the darkness. It was Schillig signal-station. Everything was just as it had always been. Only those in command had changed.

The bar was crossed. Three dark shadows glided over the tenantless outpost zone. Vosslapp roadstead. Wilhelmshaven roadstead.

The anchors dropped.

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STOKER KUHNT AS PRESIDENT OF OLDENBURG

"Ebert as Chancellor—Three Independents in the Government—Noske Governor of Kiel—Germany a Republic—The Kaiser fled!"

For the moment it overpowers even Bernhard Kuhnt.

He must see Schlegel and Schneider.

"What made the Independents in Berlin agree to enter a coalition?"

Orderlies keep on coming in. Warrant-officers, citizens, comrades of the Dockyard Division are asking to see him, Kuhnt. But he sends them all away. He has no time now. The Council of Twenty-one and the Committee of Five must be called together at once. There is but one item on the agenda: "Formation of the People's Government. Election of a President."

By Sunday he must be President.

In the early hours of the morning, after long and heated debate, Press Officer Schneider lays before the Council of Twenty-one the formal proclamation of the Socialist Republic of Oldenburg. The Deed of Abdication prepared for the Grand Duke of Oldenburg is likewise read out.

Drunkenly the Councillors nod their approval.

Then comes Kuhnt's great hour.

He is unanimously elected President of the Republic of Oldenburg.

KUHNT'S TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND "SUPERS"

Orders of the day for Sunday, the tenth of November, 1918:

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Uniform: No. 1 dress, blue trousers, blue jumper, greatcoat, black shoes.

Nine o'clock: Fall in beside the ship.

Nine ten: March to the town.

It is a feeble imitation of the Imperial Navy's orders.

But Kuhnt and his comrades are good judges of the men's psychology. The majority of the ratings, petty-officers and warrant-officers march obediently along with the crowd; the indispensable mass is set in motion.

Sixty bands. Prussian military marches. A hundred thousand men under the red banners—and the war still on. The Grodenplatz is filled to overflowing. The masses wait, as they have always waited. They stand patiently around the tribunes erected there. They are scarce aware what they are assembled for.

Two hundred thousand "supers" to make a crowd scene for Kuhnt.

At eleven o'clock several cars shoot along under the tall, leafless trees towards the Grodenplatz. The men of high degree. The Council of Twenty-one. Comrade Kuhnt, now President of Oldenburg, at once mounts the principal tribune.

"Comrades! As President of the Soviet of Workers, Soldiers and Sailors, I am charged to speak to you here to-day. Great things have come to pass in these last days. Now we shall strike the final blow against the old, rotten system of the State!"

The masses gape. Those behind cannot hear a word of what he is saying.

"The old State has left behind it many festering sores—poverty and mourning, men dead and mutilated. You have come here to-day in great numbers; but there would be a still mightier army in this square"—Kuhnt's voice falters and breaks—"if we had with us all the dead whose slaughter lies upon the conscience of the State.

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We must march with the times. The Revolution has long been knocking on the door."

Kuhnt stands there, as though taking a curtain call. Then he continues his oration.

" We must set ourselves now to re-create this Germany of ours, to change it into a free and glorious Fatherland. There is but one way to do this. All the people must come together, working with united effort to build the foundations of the Socialist Republic ! "

Pause for effect. Those in front clap their approval, and the applause is dutifully taken up throughout the crowd.

" In these days of revolution it was the Navy that gave the final impetus. Those fine fellows made one more powerful appeal to the German people. They were young idealists who fell victims to militarism a year or so ago. In acting as they did, they made a great and noble sacrifice. The movement they began could not be stemmed. The wave of revolution swept over the whole of Germany. Everywhere these young men in blue came forward to raise the red banner, the symbol of freedom ! "

Pause. But no cheers. He waves his arms theatrically, raises his voice.

" Everything now serves our cause. We hold all power in our hands. But time presses, and we must act quickly. After long and earnest deliberation last night, we were able to remove the last obstacle from our path. The Council of Twenty-one of the North Sea Station has resolved to declare all the territory and islands under its jurisdiction a Socialist Republic ! "

Half-hearted applause. The crowd does not seem to grasp the meaning of the address.

Kuhnt comes to his peroration.

" That is our desire. Workers of the world, unite ! We have to-day laid the foundations of that unity. To this end let us dedicate our labours in the future ! "

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Many of the " coolies " pull long faces.

" A colossal task remains for all of us to do ! "

The faces grow still longer. Kuhnt brings his address to a vehement close.

" Now we must build up ; now we must not talk, but act ! Long live the Socialist Republic ! *Hoch, hoch, hoch !* "

The last " *hoch*," bellowed from a thousand throats, rolls like a roaring breaker over the crowded square.

Then Comrade Schneider mounts the tribune. In the name of the Council of Five, he reads out the proclamation establishing the Socialist Republic. Then he announces : " The Grand Duke of Oldenburg is deposed. Comrade Kuhnt is unanimously elected President ! "

The bands strike up the Internationale. The old Social Democrats remove their shabby hats. Shouts are raised : " Off with your caps ! "—" Take off that hat ! "

There must be some discipline in the thing. With bared heads the crowds listen to the stirring melody of France's National Anthem.

Ten aeroplanes circle over the Grodenplatz, dropping leaflets. On all barracks and public buildings red flags are hoisted. Thousands of star-shells are fired. A mighty tumult of noise.

Further speakers mount the various tribunes. One only among them addresses his speech not to the masses in the square. An elderly docker. He appeals to the Socialists of the Allied countries to spread throughout the whole world the work now begun in Germany. Unprompted by the agitators, he really believes in the faith to which he gives utterance in the words : " The International must come ! "

Last of all speaks Comrade Schlegel. A bloodless theorist. The tens of thousands of seamen understand nothing of what he says. He shows Karl Marx to be the founder and spiritual creator of international Socialism.

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" We shall plant this idea in the hearts of all peoples. Not with rifles and machine-guns, but with the weapons of the spirit ; until at last we see the bloodless victory of the World Revolution ! "

THE SOVIETS CELEBRATE THEIR VICTORY

The officers' mess.

Headquarters of the Republican People's Soviet.

They are celebrating victory.

President Kuhnt is in the chair. His sudden rise has gone to his head. From his sixpence a day to this is a big jump—it multiplies his pay by hundreds.

Comrade Schneider toasts him with a prophetic smile.

" Here's to you, Bernhard ! "

" All the best, old man ! "

" Noske is Governor of Kiel ! "

" That bloody profiteer ! "

" Fancy Popp and Artelt letting themselves be shoved aside like that ! "

Kuhnt casts his eye over the table. The food was excellent, and the members of the Soviet did ample justice to it. Very different fare, this, from what they got in the ships' mess.

" These conditions for the Armistice . . . ", Schlegel begins.

Kuhnt goes quite pale. It is as if someone were clutching at his throat.

" Talk about that to-morrow," he wheezes, grasping the wine list in his shaking hand—Liebfraumilch, Schwarze Katze, Nierensteiner, Domtaler, and other kinds of Rhine wines and Moselles.

He gulps down a cherry brandy.

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" Waiter ! "
" More wine ! "

Crowds of people are standing outside, clamouring to see the President. But it is impossible to drag Kuhnt to his feet.

Schneider is sent out to pacify the people.

In the name of the President, who is greatly fatigued after the exhausting labour of the last few days, he thanks them for their tribute.

" The first achievement of our world-shaking movement is the Armistice concluded on all fronts. Now we shall banish the last remnants of militarism from the world. Let every man remain at his post and do his duty loyally ; then we shall be able to carry out the demobilisation rapidly and without friction. The Council of Twenty-one will now devote its earnest attention to the problems of reconstruction, in order to set the seal of completion upon the great and sacred work.

" Three cheers for our first President ! *Hoch, hoch, hoch !* "

The crowd takes up the cheers enthusiastically, and then disperses so as not to disturb the labours of the People's Soviet.

Inside, things are getting livelier. Flushed faces, wine-fogged brains. Heated arguments arise. Several old trade unionists forget their parts. They try to raise a cheer for Ebert and Scheidemann. The proposal is promptly quashed. The wine goes to the men's heads. They sing the Internationale, repeating the chorus dozens of times.

A party secretary declares to a little group of friends that it would be betraying the proletariat for any member of the Soviet to enter into negotiations with the officers. This shaft is aimed at Kuhnt.

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Politics. Business. The Republic. All jumbled up in a babel of voices.

" Waiter, more booze here ! "

" Here, too, waiter ! Get a move on ! "

Brandy. Wine. Champagne. The cellar of the officers' mess seems as if it would never run dry.

A former platform speaker takes his stand in front of a battery of empty bottles and begins to make an oration.

" I have succeeded in coming unscathed through the long years of the war. A miraculous achievement when you consider the immense extent of this war. A mere trifle when you know the thousand-and-one dodges of the shirker ! "

Propped on his hands, he leans forward over the table and glares at the wine bottles. His head is spinning. The bottles start to dance. They assume the shapes of officers.

He bellows at them like a bull :

" I'll do for you, you gang of swine ! You've played us up long enough ! "

Then he crashes to the floor, dragging with him table, bottles and glasses ; and remains prostrate among the *débris*.

The others scarcely notice him. Champagne corks are popping. Voices babbling drunkenly. The Republican victory gala peters out in witlessness and wine.

ARMISTICE

The insane Armistice terms, which the Parliamentary Government had been withholding from the German people for days, struck horror to the hearts of all thinking men.

" One hundred submarines, six battle cruisers, ten

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dreadnoughts, six light cruisers and fifty torpedo-boats are to be surrendered. The remaining warships are to be disarmed."

Dumb horror in the seaport towns.

This was the end of the High Seas Fleet.

It was starvation for tens of thousands of dockyard workers.

It was ruin to the careers of thousands of petty-officers, warrant-officers and commissioned-officers.

It was bankruptcy for a struggling middle-class.

It was disaster for the German naval ports.

It was the destruction of Germany's position as a World Power.

It was the collapse of Germany as an independent State.

The red flags hung out like warnings in the clammy November fog:

"Beware! This way danger lies!"

Even the Red President Kuhnt felt as though he had fallen from the clouds. He rattled out wireless appeals and cries for help into empty space. The radio stations of the world's conscience had been closed down since the ninth of November, 1918. The peoples of France, Britain, America and Italy refused to stir. For the second time the International was revealed as a gigantic fraud.

The Entente's smiling mask of peace changed all at once to bitter hatred. The Allies refused point-blank to enter into any discussions. All they asked was fulfilment of their conditions, surrender, disarmament—at once. That was all.

Kuhnt was in despair. If this was true, then it was all a colossal hoax. He clasped his head between his hands and bowed over the table. Schneider, the Chief Press Officer, was speechless. Schlegel and the rest of

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the Council of Five goggled at one another like geese in a thunderstorm. Here was Germany marching all by herself into the brotherhood of nations.

With theoretical fallacies they proved to one another that their Marxist ideas were right.

" It will all turn out differently ! " " The enemy are quite justified in ensuring themselves against attack ! "—" The Admirals are merely trying to stir up the people ! "—" We must not allow ourselves to be deflected from our great work for peace ! "

Thus was stirring conscience stifled under a mass of phrases.

" What do the officers know of international brotherhood ? "—" We must first prove by deeds our eagerness for peace ! "—" That is what we must tell the people ! "—" World disarmament is coming ! "

Warrant-officers, petty-officers, men who had re-enlisted in the navy were staggered by the blow. Their very existence was at stake. The townsfolk gathered in dense throngs. Without the Fleet, without the tens of thousands of sailors, they would be ruined. With Germany's defensive force would collapse all that drew life from it. Honour lost—everything lost.

Disturbances took place in the streets ; but patriotic protests made no impression whatever on the indifferent mass of the crews.

Deputations of warrant-officers and petty-officers waited upon the Soviet.

But the President had his hands full with other things. Differences had arisen regarding appointments to official positions. Deserving warriors of the revolutionary vanguard were clamouring for immediate recognition of their services.

The Council of Five took shelter behind the Council of Twenty-one.

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The various committees were quarrelling over questions of competence.

The deputations grew impatient. There were heated protests. The members of the Soviet gave way. They were only too well aware of their impotence. They put off the honest warrant-officers and petty-officers with empty promises.

The U-boat crews rebelled in a body. They categorically refused to sail in any submarine sent for surrender to England.

Comrade Schneider of the Council of Five, in his capacity as Press Officer, concocted fresh manifestoes to reassure the people. The printing presses were kept working at high pressure. Handbills. Broadsheets. Posters.

Each of these three kinds of propaganda sheet bore the same text :

NOTICE

We appeal once more to members of the public to preserve the greatest orderliness and restraint. They must maintain their calm, even in face of such news as that received yesterday regarding the Armistice conditions. The Workers', Soldiers', and Sailors' Soviet is in continuous touch with the Chancellor and with the Supreme Army Command, and is therefore able to keep a firm control of the situation. Consequently, all announcements not made directly by the Soviet should be received with the strictest reserve.

Press Department,
Workers', Soldiers', and Sailors' Soviet.
WILHELMSHAVEN, (Signed) SCHNEIDER.
November 11, 1918.

President Kuhnt pushed on one side the decrees relating to the disarmament of the ships and the destruc-

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tion of their weapons. More important by far was the proclamation to all the ships and to the public regarding the Armistice celebrations. Something must be done to divert the attention of the masses. Consequently: All men granted leave until morning.—Public dancing in all assembly rooms.—Messes placed under obligation to issue an extra meat ration or some other special dish for supper.—The entire supply of rockets to be fired off at a given signal after dark.

Aboard the warships all was in disorder. Three-quarters of the crews turned up for mess, but barely half of them reported for duty.

President Kuhnt's decrees and the Soviet's orders were subjected to a fire of ridicule by sailors now delivered from the yoke of militarism. On their own authority they voted themselves a hot supper and a half-bottle of wine *per capita* out of the officers' stores. Others arranged private dances for the crews, at which wine and liqueurs from the rifled store-rooms were to furnish the necessary cheer free of charge.

The streets of Wilhelmshaven, where but a few hours earlier demonstrations had been protesting against the merciless severity of the Armistice terms, now witnessed in the darkness of the evening scenes of unbridled carnival. All at once a great tongue of flame leaped up in the dockyard area. The outlines of the buildings were thrown into stark prominence by the glare. The faces of passers-by assumed a greenish hue. It was like the pallor of death. An evil omen for the future. Almost immediately the streets sank back again into the half-light of their normal illumination. But then came loud reports from the harbour basin, from the dockyard and from the barracks.

The entire stock of rockets was being discharged. The irregular, uncontrolled firing from all the ships at once

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created a marvellous pyrotechnic display over the harbour.

The Kaiser Wilhelm Bridge was spanned by a glittering arch of light. Red, white and green stars traced fiery paths across the sky.

Thousands of distress signals mounted the nocturnal heavens, beseeching help.

A Marine infantryman and a leading-seaman were walking along the planking of the South Harbour. When the discharge of rockets began they were just opposite the *Derfflinger*, whose mighty contours stood out with telling clearness in the sudden brilliance.

The man in field-grey gripped his companion's arm.

"Gorch, they're doing that to mock the Western front!"

"Ach, Jupp, it's all so disgusting; I can't bear to think of what may happen!"

"Yes, what *will* happen?"

"The French will occupy our country. They'll march into Strassbourg in a few days now."

"To hell with the whole gang that let us down like this!"

They were now opposite the bows of the battleship *Prinzregent Luitpold*. The green star of a Very light fell close beside them, flaring up for a last time and illuminating the hull of the mighty vessel. Both men could clearly distinguish the Bavarian Royal arms beside the great anchor, and beneath them the motto:

"Ever Loyal."

"Good-bye to that for the present," they thought as they walked slowly and in silence towards the wide-open, unguarded gates of the dockyard.

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THE OFFICERS HAVE TO STEP INTO THE BREACH AGAIN

The Council of Twenty-one were negotiating with the Naval Command.

This was the first pilgrimage of penitence to the much-reviled officers.

Two worlds faced one another across the table.

The Admirals were typical of their rank and class. Stern, reserved, grave.

In other ways besides they somehow resembled one another—not merely in their uniforms, but in cast of countenance and in the self-confidence of their bearing.

The members of the Soviet were a bevy of the most varied types. Under-sized figures, bullet-heads, coarse features, low foreheads, stupid expressions. Swayed by mass-delusions, they felt cramped even in their ideas by the presence of a few Admirals.

The talk ranged this way and that. By their blunt, presumptuous and defiant tone the members of the Soviet endeavoured to mask their mental inferiority. They became involved in side-issues. Time after time Admiral von Hipper tactfully brought the discussion round again to the main point. The Soviet found this consciousness of responsibility distasteful. They wriggled. They felt their power evaporating. The British had refused to treat with the Soviets. Individual crews had recalled their officers to cope with the disorder on board. Thousands of men were absconding daily without leave. A few days more and the whole Fleet would have dispersed.

Consequently the officers would have to step into the breach.

The Commander-in-Chief announced his conditions:

"The command of the ships must be vested in the officers."

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"The Soviets are not to interfere in the internal affairs of the Corps of Officers."

"Officers are not to be repudiated by their crews."

The Council of Twenty-one were ready to swallow everything. They asked only that one further point should be conceded:

"Duties on board shall be regulated by agreement with the Soviets."

The Naval Command assented. The conference was closed.

THE COUNCIL OF TWENTY-ONE

The Council of Twenty-one were in session.

Armed sentries before the building, in the vestibule and in the corridors. A busy coming and going.

Typewriters were rattling. Telephones were ringing. Orderlies came in with reports. In the hall there was a babel of voices. Everything that went on was petty and ignoble. The smooth-running machine that controlled the Imperial Navy had been wantonly destroyed, and could not now be set in motion again.

The whole pitiful character of a revolt founded upon mutiny and desertion was mirrored in this Council of Twenty-one. Those who had not yet received appointments were still seeking a vent for their jealousy.

Power was slowly slipping from the grasp of the Soviets.

President Kuhnt's face was ashen. Was he fearful of being driven from his presidential chair? Was he crushed by the Armistice terms that threatened to annihilate the people of whom he was one? Had the negotiations with the Admirals been too much for him? Or had

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he been participating in the drunken debauchery of his companions ? Did he feel slighted by Britain's brusque refusal to treat with the Soviets ? Or had he realised that in international affairs a nation can only be dealt with as a single entity ? Or was he still wondering why his great appeal to the peoples of America, Britain and France had evoked no response ?

All at once he raised his hands as though to ward off an evil vision. But the figure that stood there offering him documents refused to be exorcised. He wiped the cold sweat from his brow. Curse it ! Was he suffering from hallucinations ? It was only an orderly, with a red band on his sleeve, bringing a few papers to be signed.

He signed : Announcements. Appeals. Decrees. Concessions. The same old trash. Everyone asking for something.

No one ready to make sacrifices.

CLEARING OUT THE NAVAL STORES

Wilhelmshaven is chock-full of sailors.

The music halls, cinemas, cabarets and theatres open their doors at noon. Seamen's taverns, cafés, underground restaurants and bars are crammed to overflowing. Money counts for nothing. The tradespeople are overwhelmed by one last great flood of business. No one gives a thought to what must come afterwards.

The Trocadero Café.

A few weeks before it was a staid and respectable place. But the new era has thrown down all barriers. Distinctions of rank and class have been expunged. Common courtesy counts as reactionary weakness. The members of the Soviets set the tone. They tap their bulging wallets. Shamelessly they traffic away naval stores to

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corpulent men with well-filled note-cases. These are no fictitious deals.

"Two hundredweight of vaseline; ready to take away."

"Forty marks."

The bargain is quickly concluded.

"A hundred packets of tobacco. Ten thousand Salem No. 4 cigarettes."

These belong to one of the men's canteens. The fat profiteer makes a calculation. Opulent rings flash on his coarse fingers.

"Two hundred marks."

The workman, a member of one of the Soviets, accepts the offer. He is well aware that these embezzled stores are worth many times the sum offered. But cash is cash. He needs money. To-morrow he is going to abscond to Berlin. And his comrades? Let them elect a new member to fill his place. No doubt his successor won't find it so easy to get ready money.

"Waiter, waiter! Get a move on! Another bottle here!"

The waiter brings the wine. He takes the money on the spot. Too many of these fellows have gone off without paying their bills.

Women, imported fresh from Bremen, prance about the room. Saucy glances, provocative toilettes. The band strikes up. In the gangways between the tables the linked couples sway.

Prostitutes usually patronised by petty-officers hang on the arms of common seamen. A lank-limbed negress is dancing with a stoker from the *Prinzregent*, while a stamping mob bellows out the latest imbecility from the music halls.

A man selling newspapers enters the long room.

"*Republic*. Latest edition!"

"*Republic!*"

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Many people buy the paper from force of habit. It is the political intelligencer of the Workers', Soldiers', and Sailors' Soviet. First year of issue. There is very little in it. Manifestoes and announcements. A few advertisements.

The band strikes up again. Fresh couples take the floor. A new chorus. Those sitting down beat time with feet and fists. The waiters are unable to cope with the orders. The proprietor himself is obliged to help serve his clients. Wine. Liqueurs. Champagne. The air is laden with the fumes of alcohol and sensuous perfumes. A man at one of the tables says something about the cruel severity of the Armistice terms. But his words are drowned in the alcoholic babble. A newspaper flutters to the floor. The fat profiteer expectorates, and his spittle strikes full on the Soviet's latest appeal for discipline. Then high-heeled shoes and sea-boots pass dancing over the *Republic*, trampling it literally in the filth.

A quarrel has arisen for possession of the negress, who is dancing with the *Prinzregent* stoker again. A Chief Petty-officer is asserting his rights by virtue of prior acquaintance. The stoker is a better catch in these days. But both of them are members of Soviets. Solidarity goes by the board. They rush at one another like bulls. Glasses and bottles clatter on to the floor. The proprietor, the manager and the waiters hustle the two men through the door and out into the street. Both Soviet Councillors collapse dead-drunk in the gutter. The negress, meanwhile, has found another partner.

The cabarets have been transformed overnight.

Musical clowns tinkle out the Internationale on empty wine-glasses.

The chorus girls appear in red bathing costumes.

Goddesses of Liberty (sixteen stone live-weight) strike attitudes in mimicry of New York's famous statue.

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Orchestrinas, player-pianos and gramophones churn out the Internationale upon the alcohol-laden air.

The cinemas are showing the latest film : " Ferdinand Lasalle."

Vicious brawls at night.

The Soviet police are not dependable. Sometimes whole squads of them are found dead-drunk, minus their revolvers and sword-belts.

There is no such thing as a statutory closing-hour.

Members of the Soviet are fetched in cars from the night haunts and brothels and driven back to their ships at dawn.

Dockers stagger along the dank and foggy streets, or sleep off their liquor on the doorsteps.

Burglary, highway robbery and murder are of daily occurrence.

The Council of Twenty-one are at their wits' end.

The Press Department of the Workers', Soldiers', and Sailors' Soviet begins to wage a paper-war. Manifestoes. Adjurations. Threats. Handbills and posters blazon forth :

COLLEAGUES AND COMRADES !

The times are grave. We need your help to-day more than ever before. Of that you must be fully conscious. DISCIPLINE AND SELF-CONTROL ARE THE PRIME OBLIGATIONS UPON ALL WHO ARE FIGHTING FOR OUR CAUSE. Under no circumstances whatever can breaches of the decrees and promulgations of the Soviet be tolerated. You must yourselves be aware that opposition and indiscipline cannot but be INIMICAL TO THE CAUSE. For the sake of our movement and the future of our State, we appeal to you to

PERFORM YOUR DUTIES AS USUAL.

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If any of you have complaints to make, lay them before the Soviet, and your grievances shall be remedied. Nothing can be done without sanction of the Soviet.

LONG LIVE LIBERTY AND PEACE !

In the name of the Workers', Soldiers', and Sailors' Soviet,
(Signed) SCHNEIDER.

In the dockyard and aboard the ships, the men purloin anything they can lay hands on : metal parts, sail-cloth, coconut matting, binoculars, linoleum, grease, oil.

From the ships' stores : tins of potted-meat, sugar, coffee, tinned-milk, bully-beef.

Ashore, all this loot is lavished on prostitutes or sold to the profiteers who come flocking to Wilhelmshaven in search of such bargains.

The officers, now recalled to their ships, are able to remedy this state of affairs only by slow degrees. Warrant-officers, petty-officers and the decent section of the crews do their utmost to help.

DISARMAMENT

Disarmament.

The battleships and cruisers lay moored to the quays in the South Harbour, like cattle marked for slaughter.

Cranes, with " Long Henry " at their head, were carrying out the work of demolition. Bloodless amputation. The range-finders, transmitters and other gunnery instruments were clutched in huge fists and torn from their places. Red and black conducting wires hung like ragged nerves and sinews from the uprooted instruments.

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It was as though limbs and eyes were being torn from a living body.

The spectacle rent the hearts of the officers, warrant-officers and loyal petty-officers. Many of the ratings refused to take part in the work. They declined to move a finger to assist the self-emasculation of their country. The rest performed the labour only in consideration of an appropriate increase in pay.

They must have money to atone for this wretched and repugnant work. Pay for guard duty. Wages by the hour. Bonuses for disarmament labour: fifty per cent. for day work; one hundred per cent. for night work. Wage-demands forced through with the threat of rifles and hand-grenades.

* * * * *

On the fourteenth of November the two light cruisers, *Königsberg* and *Köln*, their Ensigns flying, were lying off Wilhelmshaven.

Their crews were still firmly under the control of the officers.

When they passed the mine-barrier, Schillig signal station had ordered them to strike the Ensign; and now the same command came from the No. 1 lock, with the ludicrous threat of firing if the order was not complied with.

And once again the same pitiable spectacle was witnessed.

The glorious flag was struck without a struggle.

The red flag was hoisted on the last ships of what had been but a month ago the proud High Seas Fleet of the German Empire.

The captains and officers went below.

Vampire-like, Wilhelmshaven sucked into its red maw these last remaining warships.

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U-BOATS REFUSE TO STRIKE THE ENSIGN

There were still German warships cruising under the black-white-and-red Ensign. They went from port to port in the Baltic. Flensburg, Lübeck, Warnemünde, Stralsund, Danzig—all called upon them to haul down the glorious flag.

U. 241 was cruising in Mecklenburg Bay.

Lieutenant-commander Volker had made a final resolve. He knew that he and his crew were united. But for that very reason he wished them to be free to choose whether they would follow him, or be set ashore here somewhere on German territory.

The coast of Mecklenburg emerged out of the distance ahead. The hills of the Doberaner Heath were veiled by the oblique rays of the setting sun. It was here that the magnificent chain of Baltic watering-places was situated. The submarine veered a few degrees to port.

She passed Arendsee. Brunshaupten came into view. The jetties reached out into the sea like long arms.

"All hands on deck!"

The little crew lined up on deck. Lieutenant-commander Volker addressed them:

"Comrades!"

On his lips the word was no meaningless tag, but sanctified by common hopes and perils.

"You all know what has befallen our country. Our vessel will be allowed to enter a German harbour only on condition that we strike the flag under which we have fought and faced untold privations in the North Sea and the Atlantic.

"That I shall refuse to do. I shall take our trusty boat into a neutral port. If any one of you, my comrades, feels he cannot stand by me in this action, let him say so

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now, and we will part without rancour. He can go ashore at Brunshaupten or Heiligendamm."

Not a man stirred, but in those weather-beaten faces the eyes assumed a graver glance. The Captain's mouth twitched for a second. He choked back his emotion and regained his self-control.

"I thank you, comrades! I assume full responsibility for all the consequences of the step we are about to take."

And he called to the helmsman to bring the vessel round on the new course.

U. 241 was passing athwart the well-known Baltic watering place of Heiligendamm. Several inhabitants were running to and fro on the beach, and waving to her. She swung over a few degrees to port and cruised alowly away.

The men could find no word to say as they watched the coasts of home sink below the horizon. Silent, too, was the Captain as he went below. But Friedrichsen, the Hamburger, lifted up his voice to sing the pirate song that had been sung so many times on all the Seven Seas :

"The Eagle is lord of the boundless plain ;
In the skies he is captain of kings.
The birds of the air, they all tremble and quake
At the beat of his storm-riding wings."

Thirty powerful voices took up the strain :

"The lion in the desert holds kingly sway,
And before him all animals flee.
But we are the lords of the boundless plain,
And we are the kings of the sea!"

With mighty élan they sang the next verse :

"We leap with joy when we sight a sail.
Be it many a league away,
Our slender ship, with an eagle's swoop,
Bears down on the quivering prey!"

In the cabin below, the Commanding Officer, his head

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resting upon his hands, was listening to the compelling melody of his favourite song :

" The merchant is pale and palsied with fear,
And the sailor cries aloud."

The words roared tempestuously in his ear :

" Their eyes are fixed on the Black-White-Red
That blows from our foretop proud ! "

Stirred to the very depths of his being, he closed the cabin door ; and as he rose to do so his eye fell upon the portrait of his grandfather. Now, indeed, it had come to pass as the old man had so often prophesied to him in his boyhood : that Germany would know a day when all her sons who remained faithful to her could stand in the shelter of a single oak tree.

Four hours afterwards the Swedish coast appeared on the horizon. They passed steamers, fishing-boats and yachts.

The Swedish ships saluted the German Ensign respectfully. International signal-flags were run up on the submarine's signal-mast. A harbour patrol-boat came alongside. The Swedes gazed in amazement at these U-boat pirates, decried throughout the Seven Seas.

The Swedish officer heard with sympathy and understanding the reason for their coming.

He stared full of admiration at the splendid U-boat men.

" The pick of the Northerners," he said to his companion.

" It beats me how such things can be happening in Germany."

" You've got the reason here," answered the other. " All the best men are at the front."

U. 241 was not the only U-boat that went into voluntary

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internment. Danish, Norwegian and even Spanish ports gave asylum to German submarines.

SOVIET COUNCILLORS

The Soviet Councillors are living like princes.

Money counts for nothing.

Battleship *Nassau*.

Soviet Councillor Rehbein comes into a flat below deck one evening.

" Cramer, will you do me a favour ? Take a few cases ashore at eight o'clock."

" Sorry, I'm going ashore myself."

But Cramer does not go ashore. Towards eight o'clock he takes up his position with a comrade behind the rubbish bins in front of the ship.

They have not long to wait. The Soviet Councillors are punctual where business of this sort is to be done. The light of headlamps swings over the Kaiser Wilhelm Bridge. A car turns the corner.

It drives up to the *Nassau*. The headlights are switched off.

Two laden figures come down the dark gangway. Chests. Packing-cases. Bundles. The driver is about to bring his car closer in. But just then Cramer leaps out of his hiding place. A shot is fired at the front tyres. The second sailor wrenches open the door of the saloon. But the men in the car jump out at the opposite door and take to their heels. Comrades come running down the gangway from the ship.

They question the driver.

" The packing-cases were to be shipped to Port Arthur. And that's all I know about it ! "

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"To a whore-shop, you mean!"

"That gang of thieves is squandering everything on women!"

The packing-cases, chests and bundles are taken back on board again.

Twenty pounds of butter. Ten dried sausages. Fifteen pounds of ground coffee. Ten pounds of sugar; and such-like.

These provisions are divided fairly among the mess-decks at breakfast next morning.

Another ship.

The Soviet is holding its meeting in the First Officer's cabin. A bow-legged civilian walks brazenly on board. The Soviet bargain with him below. But there are eavesdroppers.

When the profiteer comes up on deck again he is accosted at the gangway.

Two stalwart leading-seamen relieve him of his overcoat. They find an inventory: Champagne. Red wine. Liqueurs. Cherry brandy. Danzig brandy. Cognac. In all, two hundred and forty bottles sold for one hundred and eighty marks. Cash received. The Soviet. Stamped. Signed.

Left, right—the Jew gets his ears soundly boxed.

"Ow! Murder!" He takes to his heels and bolts down the gangway. The Soviet perceives that something is amiss. Several of the members beat a hasty retreat.

A crowd of outraged sailors rushes aft armed with sticks, bayonets and revolvers. The Councillors barricade the door. It is hammered down. But the lair is empty. The money has gone. The miscreants have jumped through the scuttle into the sea and swum ashore.

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"COOLIES"

The mass-intoxication quickly passes.

The frightful terms of the Armistice degrade the revolutionary sailors to the level of coolies in the employ of foreign militarism.

The soldier on parade is no more.

In his place has arisen the sweated labourer.

Coal-heaving. Surrender of munitions. Disarmament. Disarmament. Disarmament. Speed. Full steam ahead. Time is short. The enemy is putting on the screw.

Sunday labour. Night shifts.

Thousands of heavy gun shells are stacked on the pier in the South Harbour.

The work is proceeding slowly, dilatorily.

But the Soviets are powerless.

Extra pay. Extra rations.

Neither is any longer effective. Ruin and decay have gone too far.

The ships' crews melt away.

The number of those willing to work dwindles hourly.

The men demand their discharge at the revolver's mouth.

All the trains are crowded to bursting-point. With or without their discharge papers, the sailors leave the port in hordes.

The station has to be picketed to prevent men rushing across the lines to board outgoing trains.

No use.

Merely a double source of income for the sentries. Sentry duty pay is increased almost hourly. The crews, their whole hearts set on getting away, cram money into the sentries' hands. Two—three—four—five marks.

That does the trick. Rifles laid aside, they help to carry the kit-bags to the train.

"Cheerio, old pal!"

"Home" is the watchword.

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ASH WEDNESDAY

At Kiel and the other ports the same scenes are being enacted. The populous streets grow gradually emptier. Business life languishes. The great twilight of the idols descends.

Once more German dreadnoughts pass through the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal. They are the vessels disarmed at Kiel, the battleships *Bayern*, *Grosser Kurfürst*, *Kronprinz Wilhelm*, *Markgraf*, *König Albert* and *Kaiserin*, and the battle cruisers *Seydlitz* and *Moltke*.

Yet it is not the same spectacle that these journeys through the canal used to present. The giant ships crawl along miserably, at irregular intervals.

Shattered fighting units, which, despite their numerous fifteen-inch gun turrets, yet blazon forth the self-emasculation of the nation.

On the lower-decks the revolutionary sailors sit grumbling and cursing for the loss of their Sunday leave. They would like to have stopped at Kiel, but they have degraded themselves to the level of coolies in the employ of hostile militarism, and now they must do the bidding of the enemy Admiral, " Sir Beatty."

Under cover of night the ships drop anchor in Schillig roadstead. With a dull rumbling sound the anchors rattle down into the deep. A few Morse signals, and then all signs of life are smothered under the starless heaven.

Wilhelmshaven, too, has its Ash Wednesday.

The disarmed warships pass laboriously through the lock. Imbecile crowds yell themselves hoarse with cheering—in order to stifle the faint stirring of conscience.

Thus is the port deserted.

The once crowded streets fall silent. The vulture of

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bankruptcy hovers over Wilhelmshaven. Soon the town will be more silent still. Then it will be too late.

Slow and sluggish, even as the ebb tide of the Jade, the ships gather in what was once their outpost zone.

Wilson's Fourteen Points are already floating on the far Atlantic.

Now the German Fleet must follow.

To-morrow, at the enemy's command, the crews will weigh anchor.

Three weeks ago they refused to obey that order, when it was given for the protection of their own country.

Admiral von Hipper is awaiting Rear-Admiral Meurer's return from the negotiations aboard the British flagship.

The light cruiser *Königsberg* is racing across the North Sea. Wireless messages speed out before.

More and more stipulations by the British. They now demand that the disarmed ships shall be handed over by a German Admiral.

At the last moment, Vice-Admiral Ludwig von Reuter takes this duty upon himself.

His Chief of Staff is Lieutenant-Commander Oldekop.

Commander Cordes is in command of the torpedo-boats.

On the evening of the seventeenth of November the staff goes aboard the *Friedrich der Grosse*.

A mountainous accumulation of work still remains to be done.

The inevitable Soviet Councillors come hovering about once more. They have not yet realised that their pitiful part is played and over.

All is disorder and confusion in Schillig roadstead.

It is very late when the last lights are put out.

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THE LAST VOYAGE

" Raise anchor ! "

Seaman Berger started out of his midday doze. The order stabbled him to the heart.

So it had come to this.

He looked gloomily over to his companions.

There they sat. Indifferent, slow-witted, silly, insolent. Playing *skat* or *vingt-et-un*, gossiping.

The same monotonous words :

" A twister."

" And one."

" I'll stand."

Gambler's greed written on every face. There were six marks in the bank. The banker glanced at his own hand.

" Eighteen ! "

He turned up one more card.

" Bust ! "

When the winners had been paid there was only one mark in the bank. The banker, a member of the Soviet, rose to his feet in a rage.

Money lost—it touched him on the quick.

They cared not a straw for their country's honour.

Even the fact that all the most modern German warships were now being surrendered at the behest of enemy militarism failed to shake the arrogant complacency of these anti-militarists.

Berger took hold of his cap in both hands. He looked wearily at the lettering on the band.

" *S. Prinzregent Luitpold* " was written there.

He had cut out the " H.M."

This was his only comment on the Kaiser's flight.

He had found no word to say when people had poured scorn upon the Imperial deserter.

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But something had snapped within him, and he looked upon the world now through different eyes.

The casemate that had been his home for so many years seemed all at once to have become desolate and bare.

He clambered shivering up on deck.

But it was the same there.

The ships aft were strange and unreal to him. Their glory had departed.

Their grandeur was over and gone.

The battle cruiser *Derfflinger* was just sailing past to port. Fir trees had been stuck in her mast-sockets.

Fantasy of a mad-house carnival. Everyone had gone insane, thought Berger. He spat over the guard-rail. Nausea rose in his throat.

All at once Schillig roadstead began to revolve before his eyes. The *Prinzregent Luitpold* had raised anchor and was veering to starboard.

She almost grazed the *Kaiser* as she turned.

She stood disproportionately high out of the water. Berger knew that that was because she lacked her ammunition and the thousands of tons of coal that had been sacrificed to disarmament.

Disarmament! The blood rushed to his face. He could imagine nothing more senseless.

At low speed the ships moved towards the mine barrier.

Despite the glittering sunshine, everything seemed grey and cheerless.

The *Prinzregent Luitpold* passed the gate.

Berger's eye swept the long line of black boats forming the mine barrier.

They seemed to him like coffins.

Almighty God! This would drive him mad! Wherever he looked, he saw the very opposite of what had been before.

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The glory was gone, departed for ever!

Crushed and weary, he went below again. He found a dark corner amidships and laid himself down to sleep.

He would leave duty now to those who had a heart for it.

* * * * *

"Working parties fall in!"

For the third time the petty-officer of the watch shouted the order into No. 2 starboard casemate of the battle cruiser *Moltke*.

But the group of seamen refused to be distracted from their game of cards.

"Working parties!"—"The fellow's off his head!"—"Here's to you, Jan!"

Leading-seaman Karl Bauer swallowed a copious draught from the brandy bottle on the mess table.

"I double."

"A card?"—"Yes."—"Another?"—"No, I stand."

"A twister."—"And another."—"That busts me."

"We've got to surrender five thousand locomotives!"

Stoker Erdmann uttered the words in a bitter half-whisper.

"I'm taking one card."

"And tens of thousands of railway trucks!"

"I'll pay nineteen."—"You lose!"

Once more the boatswain's whistle shrilled through the compartment.

"Damn that tin-whistling!"—"You pay me; I've twenty."

"Get up on deck, there! Working parties!"

"You bet we're coming on deck!"

"Ten thousand lorries. A hundred submarines. Two thousand aeroplanes. That means millions of marks gone west!"

"No need for us to do any more work!"

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"Good health, Karl!"

Jan dealt. Ali led. The game went on.

For half an hour a third of the crew had been standing on deck ready for duty.

Nothing would induce the rest to present themselves.

Just as in No. 2 starboard casemate, sailors and stokers were sitting about on all the other mess-decks, indifferent alike to the decrees of the Soviet and to the orders of their officers. Meanwhile the ships were steaming for the last time out of Schillig roadstead into the German Bight.

* * * * *

Cruising at a speed of ten knots in the wake of her sister ship, the *Brummer*, the light cruiser *Bremse* brought up the rear.

Lieutenant Schacke stood as though rooted to the bridge, gazing fixedly ahead. The leading ship would soon be passing the Outer Jade lightship, and have to change course.

Now. Slowly the shadowy form of the battle cruiser *Seydlitz* swung round to starboard.

The *Moltke*, the *Hindenburg*, the *Derfflinger*, the *von der Tann* followed in silent, spectral procession.

The next ships to turn were closer and larger—the *Friedrich der Grosse*, the *König Albert*, the *Kaiserin*, the *Prinzregent Luitpold*, the *Kaiser*.

Schacke could name each one as she passed.

The *Bayern*, the *Grosser Kurfürst* and the *Kronprinz Wilhelm* followed. The *Markgraf* brought up the rear of the long line of battleships.

A thought came to him with lightning suddenness. In this symbolic train Germany was leading into captivity the kings and generals who had shaped her destinies through two centuries.

Now the light cruisers were changing course.

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First the *Karlsruhe ;* then the *Köln*, the *Nürnberg*, the *Emden*, the *Frankfurt*.

Once more his gaze was riveted by the spectacle.

The *Brummer* was turning now.

Only then did he notice how slowly the ships were cruising.

His thoughts stood still. The spectacle vanished from before his eyes. The *Bremse* turned at the same spot and followed the funereal train.

He must have stood thus for a long time, his gaze fixed on empty space, when he heard a voice coming as though from the uttermost distance.

The signaller was reporting for the second time :

" Forty degrees off Heligoland ! "

• • • • •

In the cruising formation that the enemy had stipulated the betrayed German ships steamed past Heligoland.

The rock blushed red, as though for very shame, under the rays of the setting sun. Who would have believed that German sailors could suffer such disgrace ?

There was something eerie and vaguely threatening in the glow that suffused the western sky.

Mute gulls wheeled over the sea.

The billows, that were such faithful and sprightly friends of German men-of-war, now lifted their heads in fear and apprehension.

They dreaded to witness this disgrace.

But the wind went leaping from ship to ship, hearkening everywhere for some last proud protest against the bitterness of betrayal. Yet the wind, too, fell to mourning at the fewness of those who remained loyal.

It was too late.

Upon this lamentation of the elements darkness came down over the silent spaces of the sea.

Victims of relentless fate, ship after ship plunged into

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the gloom and vanished pounding and panting into the yawning night ahead.

* * * * *

The North Sea lay spread like a jet-black cloth around the ships as they steamed continuously westward.

Several officers were standing on the dark bridge of the battleship *Kaiser*.

The ship was passing the scene of the battle of the seventeenth of November. In a low voice, the navigating officer informed his companions.

All at once the wind began to chant more loudly in the shrouds ; it was as though it were moaning in anguish.

Memories stirred. Old experiences rose up out of the unconscious and assumed tangible form.

The Scouting Group has reported the presence of British warships in the German Bight.

The *Kaiser* trembles in the fever of her haste.

The foremost groups of the Third Squadron rush at full speed towards the enemy.

It is a Sunday. An ideal day to " clear ships for action."

Then they see smoke-plumes, masts, ships.

The British.

Far out stretch the heavy guns. Like a thunder-tempest the salvoes roar towards the enemy.

After a brief engagement, the British turn and make westward at high speed.

That was a year ago.

And to-day——

With bitterness in their hearts, the officers stared out into the night.

To-day they were speeding westward, too.

* * * * *

Countless shadows, in conglomerate groups, were following the fleet.

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Destroyer flotillas.

The identity signals on their masts stood out clearly against the nocturnal sky.

They were rocking slowly from starboard to port.

German torpedo-boats. The terror of Britain's dreadnoughts, now on their way to surrender.

The helmsman of torpedo-boat V. 30 looked into his Commanding Officer's pale face.

He read there bitter grief at this disgrace.

He looked uneasily at the binnacle, lit with a faint light.

Suddenly the blood rushed to his head.

The strong hands that gripped the wheel began to tremble.

Disgrace stood personified before him, like a huge, stifling shadow. He turned his head aside.

What was happening?

Surely the wheel was slipping sideways. Surely the vessel was heeling over.

All at once the deafening crash of an explosion rent the nocturnal silence.

Flames burst out forward. Steam hissed into the air. Then sheets of fire leapt up.

The V. 30 began to settle down from the bows. She cracked and quivered in every joint. Rivet-heads whistled like bullets through the forward compartments.

In other compartments of the ship unsecured objects rolled about in confusion.

The sleeping crew leapt up in terror.

Screams. Words of command. Disorder.

The bows were settling deeper.

Up the companions and through the hatchways, the men surged up on deck. Wounded men were brought up. Two dead.

Shouts rang out through the night. Flashing signals.

The nearest torpedo-boats came alongside, and took off the crew.

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With a loud gurgling, the vessel settled deeper. Then, her Ensign still flying, she was swallowed by the waves.

Seven months later the whole Fleet was to follow.

• • • • •

Sinister silence reigned on the bridge of the dreadnought *Bayern*.

The few men on duty stood motionless at their posts.

The outlines of the ships ahead grew gradually more distinct against a sky now becoming brighter.

Star after star paled and disappeared, for a broad band of light was rising higher and higher on the eastern horizon.

The morning of the twentieth of November was dawning.

The leaden-footed hours dragged.

Conversations begun aloud died away in whispers.

" Dogger Bank ! " said a voice in the chart-house.

" Blücher ! " echoed someone on the bridge. The word cut like a whip.

The officers hung their heads in shame.

And still the ships cruised onward towards disgrace.

• • • • •

The light cruiser *Köln* was following reluctantly in the wake of the *Karlsruhe*.

The spirit of officers, petty-officers and men alike was such that they would have preferred to break from the line and run their vessel to destruction in the mine-fields.

Boatswains Joachim, Menge and Philippsen were sitting in the petty-officers' mess talking of the disgrace of this voyage.

Though none expressed it in words, each was trying to think of some way in which this path of shame could be cut short by violent action.

The Captain in his office was busied with the same thought.

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The First Officer on the bridge could not banish the idea from his mind.

Mile by mile the British coast was drawing nearer.

Then one man dared to act.

Through the lower compartments and down the companions a shadowy figure glided farther and farther towards the bottom of the ship. His movements were cloaked in the dim, uncertain light.

The light of a torch picked out his path.

Then the figure halted.

The engines were pounding with a dull, muffled note. "Make an end! Make an end!" they seemed to be saying, over and over again.

The sound of a man's heavy breathing.

Trembling hands fumbled at the condensers.

The grate of metal against metal. Something gave way with a jerk. Water gushed sluggishly on to the deck.

The figure hurried away.

As evening approached the *Köln* settled lower and lower by the stern.

From the bridge a signal was sent out to Admiral Reuter:

"Condenser leak. Impossible maintain speed."

* * * * *

Again night lay like a funereal pall upon the sea.

Sombre and mute, the ships steamed onward along the course bidden by the foe.

The stars looked coldly down upon them.

Boatswain Scholz was standing at the guard-rail of the battle cruiser *Derfflinger*. A deep groan was wrung from his breast.

He looked out searchingly over the dark, alluring waters.

He could not endure the betrayal of his proud and faithful ship.

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With her he had shared his joys and sorrows. She had become a second home to him.

Dogger Bank. Great Yarmouth. Lowestoft. Jutland. Each name an immortal moment of time.

And now, to-day.

He longed to make an end. Only the chill waters of the North Sea could extinguish the burning agony in his heart.

The waves were pounding with a muffled gurgle against the sides of the vessel.

Sailor, beware!

Glittering and gleaming the white wave-crests went riding by, beckoning him, calling him.

Come hither!

His anguished heart beat faster.

"I am coming, O Sea!"

He leaned out over the rail.

Then the billows rose higher, roaring: Hold hard, Bo'sun!

He gave a start.

The sound of bawling voices fell upon his ear. Half a dozen Red liberators were reeling drunkenly across the middle-deck, to disappear down the nearest hatchway, shouting and singing.

At that instant a vision of future promise rose before his eyes.

Out of the misery and desolation of these days something nobler and mightier must one day arise.

As he stood there he swore that he would not rest until he had known the hour of reckoning with these traitors to his country. Though the path lay through tears and tribulation, he would avenge her.

Proof now against all suffering, he went below into the dark and slumbering ship.

* * * * *

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The last night cruise of the German Fleet.

Long, black and massive, the great cruiser *Seydlitz* furrowed her way through the nocturnal sea.

She had a bone in her teeth ; yet the white foam of the bow-wave was quickly lost in the night's velvety blackness. But behind her stern stretched a broad, gleaming band, along which fifteen black monsters were following at intervals of some eight hundred yards. These were the battle cruisers and battleships. The wind caught the smoke of their thirty-two funnels, blowing it down over the sea aft and intensifying the gloom of the night. The smoke from the seven light cruisers followed after. The huge black cloud sank still lower over the sea, and rolled heavily back towards the dark grey shadows of the torpedo-boats.

To this great volume of smoke the forty-nine low torpedo-boat funnels added their quota, forming a cloud-bank that hung like an iron curtain behind the last vessels, and completely shut out the view to rearward.

Now and then a faint glow of fire shone from one of the funnels. Lamp signals flashed out. But save for these there was nothing but the black immensity of the North Sea.

Hour by hour the ships drew nearer to England.

Menacing, like pursuing destiny, the bank of smoke came following after.

The morning of the twenty-first of November, 1918, rose muddy-hued out of the sea. That day hid within its bosom the most shameful deed in all the history of the sea.

The voluntary surrender of the German Fleet.

Sixteen battleships.

Seven light cruisers.

Forty-nine torpedo-boats.

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THE GREAT SURRENDER

It was an unwonted scene that the first groping sunbeams illuminated in the Firth of Forth.

Above the milk-white fog-banks projected hundreds of mast-tops; they moved this way and that, forming at last into two endless columns.

Tripod-masts seemed to sprout out of the fog. Fighting-tops, funnels and superstructures came into view. Angular turrets emerged from the mist. The broad decks of immense ships. The Union Jack was fluttering proudly from the stern of each.

The Grand Fleet!

From Scapa Flow, from Thurso Bay, from Inverness and Cromarty, from Invergordon, from the English south coast ports the squadrons had been ordered hither, so that the whole fighting force of Britain might witness the end of the second largest fleet in the world.

At the head of the left line, the Fourth Battle Squadron, with the flagship, *Emperor of India*.

Four ships.

Opposite them, the Third Battle Cruiser Squadron. Four ships.

Then five huge American dreadnoughts.

Cage masts. Triple turrets. The Stars and Stripes.

Behind them, the British Fifth Battle Squadron. Five ships.

On the opposite side, four armoured cruisers and the First Battle Squadron.

Eight ships in all.

Farther along the line, four huge vessels of the *Iron Duke* class.

H.M.S. *Queen Elizabeth*.

At the far end of the line, H.M.S. *Lion*, H.M.S. *Renown*, H.M.S. *Repulse*, H.M.S. *Tiger*, and H.M.S. *Princess Royal*.

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The right-hand column. The Second Battle Squadron. Eight ships.

In between, numerous light cruisers ; destroyer flotillas.

Aircraft carriers. Older armoured cruisers.

A French warship.

An Italian.

A Japanese.

Total : sixty battleships ; one hundred and twenty light cruisers and destroyers.

* * * * *

It was towards eight o'clock.

The British cruiser *Cardiff* was lying many miles out to sea ahead of the Grand Fleet.

A captive balloon, anchored to the vessel's deck, was floating above the fog-bank.

The observers were ceaselessly scanning the horizon. They could not believe that the Huns would come.

Such a thing was impossible !

Suddenly the sweep of their binoculars was arrested.

Mast-tips, faint as pencil lines, were rising out of the mist.

Pale plumes of smoke. Fog. More masts.

The men were trembling with excitement. Could it be possible ? Was it no fairy-tale ? The Germans were coming.

For the space of a few seconds the wind parted the banks of mist.

It was true.

Masts with fighting-tops, funnels, smoke. The German ships in a long line.

Joyfully they shouted the news below :

" The German Fleet sighted ! "

* * * * *

The fifteen hundred men aboard H.M.S. *Emperor of India* had but a single thought.

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" Will they come ? "

The wireless officer rushed out of the wireless room.

" The Germans are coming ! "

The crew's victorious shout rolled wild and ecstatic through the casemates, turrets, munition chambers and handling-rooms.

" Old England for ever ! "

From bunkers, stoke-holds and engine-rooms it came echoing back.

" Old England for ever ! "

Sir David Beatty on the bridge was holding the wireless message in his hand.*

" The German ships sighted ! "

Cold and unmoved, he turned to the Staff Officers by his side.

" The Germans are punctual."

Then to the signal officer :

" Clear ship for action ! "

You never could tell ! In any case, these Germans deserved no better.

A few seconds later the signal was hoisted from the flagship :

" Clear ship for action ! "

There was a mackerel sky. The weather was murky. The light fog detracted somewhat from the effectiveness of this great display of naval might.

A heavy silence hung over the waters of the Firth of Forth.

Without a sound the two endless lines of British battleships steamed out. Proud. Majestic. They were the victors.

Beatty's signal leaped from ship to ship.

On every deck the men started into activity.

The sighting of the disarmed German ships was made

* Presumably H.M.S. *Queen Elizabeth* is meant, as this vessel, and not the *Emperor of India*, was Admiral Beatty's flagship.

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known to the eighty thousand British sailors by the order :

" Clear ship for action ! "

The British Grand Fleet received its prisoners as only disloyal and dishonoured men are received.

As enemies, and with suspicion.

No guard of honour on deck.

Not a man at the guard-rail.

They were all at action stations.

* * * * *

Aboard H.M.S. *Iron Duke*, leader of the Fourth Battle Squadron, all the guns, now cleared for action, were trained on the armoured cruiser *Seydlitz*, as she slowly detached herself from the fog. The most dramatic spectacle, and at the same time the most shameful episode in the whole naval history of the world, was about to be enacted.

In the heavy gun turrets the fifteen-inch shells were lying by the breeches in readiness for firing.

Officers and men were wearing gas-masks.

The barrels of the guns swung slowly round to follow the motion of the enemy ship.

Sailors' faces were glued to the look-out slots.

The gunnery officers in the control positions kept suspicious eyes fixed upon the enemy guns, pitifully depressed, and trained fore and aft. Ranges were being continuously taken and transmitted to the turrets.

The torpedo-officers kept signalling the bearings to the torpedo-room.

Everyone was still counting on one last blaze of defiance from the Germans.

Cynical contempt was written on many faces.

Surrender without a struggle. An inglorious victory.

The British sailors could scarcely comprehend such a thing.

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From one thing they drew consolation—they had won.

The German leading ship was passing athwart the *Iron Duke*.

Flag-signal to the *Marlborough* :

" Take over my target."

Everything proceeded as in battle. An acknowledging signal.

The range-finders in the gunnery control tower swung round.

Fog in the eye-piece. Phantom forms. Sunbeams. The mist grew thinner. The German battle cruiser *Moltke* appeared clear-cut and distinct in the glass.

Order to the guns :

" To the left ! On the nearest battle cruiser ! "

* * * * *

Without a sound the German vessels steamed in between the enemy lines.

No signal was exchanged.

No flag was dipped.

The British battleships silently turned sixteen points.

Their hulls reflected the sun's rays with a purple glow.

With downcast mien the German ships filed past the enemy.

Impotent. Disarmed. Conquered.

The British Ensigns were bellying in the breeze.

Then the German Ensigns began to flutter hesitantly.

The white flag of disgrace was blowing from the fore-top of the flagship *Friedrich der Grosse*.

It insulted all the traditions of the sea, like a blow in the face.

The curtain of fog was receding little by little before the rising sun.

The spectacle was stupendous, overpowering.

And the wind that blew over the three hundred decks of the vessels lying in the Firth of Forth bore with it a

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tremor of awe ; world history was being made before the eyes of the watching thousands.

The barrels of a thousand guns were pointing out over the German internment zone.

The brotherhood of man had sprung spontaneously into being !

* * * * *

The German Reds looked on, stupefied and incredulous.

They had long since forsaken the upper-decks, and were now squatting below.

Leading-seaman Claus Diercksen hurried through the casemates of the battleship *Markgraf*. At last he discovered Lämmel. The latter, with several members of the Soviet, was standing at one of the scuttles, watching the British ships as they came into view.

Diercksen called him to account at once. It was a propitious moment.

" Lämmel, didn't you say at Kiel that the British ships had run up the red flag ? "

Lämmel gave a start. The other sailors fell back.

" Yes, one of the Independent speakers told us they had done."

Diercksen was well under way ; he seized Lämmel by the shoulders and dragged him right up to the round scuttle.

" You haven't forgotten what I promised you ? "

Outside, the British battle cruiser *Inflexible* came into view.

" Well, what flag is that ? "

No reply.

Diercksen gave the Communist a resounding slap in the face.

H.M.S. *New Zealand* hove in sight.

Diercksen pushed the other's face right up against the scuttle-glass.

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" Now, where are the red flags ? "

A second slap. Lämmel struggled to extricate himself from Diercksen's grasp.

Another British battle cruiser was framed in the scuttle.

" Do you think I don't know a flag when I see it ? " shouted Diercksen. For the third time he struck Lämmel in the face with the flat of his hand. Enough to go on with.

" We ought to give every one of these liars a damn good hiding ! "

One of the sailors standing by ventured a remark in Lämmel's favour.

" The whole thing's a fraud," cried Diercksen—" the International, the brotherhood of man, the just peace ! We have disarmed. We have lost all our power as a nation. Now our enemies can do what they like with us."

Lämmel undid his red sailor's knot, ripped the red cockade from his cap, and flung both on the ground.

" Cursed be the hour in which I fell victim to this fraud ! "

He held out his hand to Diercksen. The latter clasped it warmly.

Outside, a British aeroplane roared past, trailing a long streamer in honour of victory.

* * * * *

In dead silence the *Seydlitz* steamed along beside the *Princess Royal*, the *Moltke* beside the *Tiger*.

The *Derfflinger* beside the *Lion*.

Old antagonists.

Victors and vanquished.

Escorted by the Fifth and First British Battle Squadrons, the German battleships of the Third Squadron followed the battle cruisers.

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They gazed dumbly across at these adversaries against which they had fought a running fight.

The Imperial and Royal ships that had fought so gloriously at Jutland were captive now.

Unutterable degradation.

The light cruiser *Emden* bore the Iron Cross as her arms. A distinction fraught with meaning.

She was escorted by the Australian cruisers *Sydney* and *Melbourne*, which had both fought in the engagement with the first *Emden*.* A sign that Britain recognised the memorable name.

The *Karlsruhe*—the *Dresden*—the *Nürnberg*—names known by the warlike prowess of earlier vessels that had borne them—were accompanied by the annihilators of the Foreign Squadron.

But one of those great British ships was not there.

H.M.S. *Invincible*.

She lay at Jutland, on the sea-bed.

Last came the German torpedo-boats. They advanced in droves over the sea now spangled by the sun.

Left in the lurch, betrayed by the big battleships, these fifty front-line vessels were forced to join this procession of shame.

Twice that number had been sent to the bottom during the war, with flags still flying.

* * * * *

Slowly the grim review unfolded itself, torturing the hearts of the German officers.

Not a voice broke the eerie silence that hung like a pall around the moving ships.

Only the whirr and roar of British aeroplanes.

Up and down, up and down the avenue of ships they flew in ceaseless patrol.

* This is incorrect. H.M.A.S. *Sydney* alone engaged and destroyed the *Emden*.—*Trans.*

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Airmen sped over the German vessels. Bombers swooped down, almost grazing the decks.

Land came into view on both sides of the Firth.

The rigid line ahead formation was relaxed.

There was an animated exchange of signals between the British ships.

Instructions from the British flagship to Admiral von Reuter. Signals from the *Friedrich der Grosse* to the German ships.

The Forth Bridge emerged in the distance.

Towards noon the vessels dropped anchor in the shelter of the North Bank.

The world's second largest fleet lay disarmed and captive in British waters.

The cheers of the British crews, as their vessels passed the flagship, sounded in German ears like the hoarse cry of ravens.

Rosyth, Edinburgh, the harbour works, the bridge, the shores of the Firth of Forth. Thousands upon thousands of people. Frantic excitement. A great tumult of joy.

"The Germans are coming!"—"The Huns!"—"The British Fleet has liberated the seas!"—"The ocean is swept clean!"

Rowing-boats, drifters, steamers. Thousands had come to witness the nation's victory. They were packed in serried crowds into every kind of craft.

"That's them! Those light grey ships over there!"

Fists shaken in menace. Workmen, society ladies, sailors; bourgeois, peers. A warlike front. The British nation.

"Now we've got you!"

"Old England for ever!"

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HAUL DOWN THE FLAG

Nearly four o'clock.

From the British flagship invisible wireless waves were sent out on their errand through the ether.

With the proud gesture of an uncoded wireless message, Admiral Beatty announced to the whole world :

" The German flag is to be hauled down at sunset [Sunset was at 3.57, German time], and is not to be re-hoisted without permission."

The wireless officer in the German flagship, *Friedrich der Grosse*, himself handed Beatty's message to Admiral von Reuter.

The faces of the officers beside him were stern and expressionless. None might know what was passing in their hearts.

They were standing together in groups. Silent, gloomy, grave. Then one of the Staff Officers took a newspaper out of his breast pocket and unfolded it.

It was the *Forward*.

His brother officers stared at one another in surprise. What was the meaning of this ?

He pointed to a passage marked with red ink, and read out aloud :

" It is our firm resolve as Socialists that Germany shall strike her Ensign for ever, without bringing it home victorious for the last time."

The officers were taken aback by the brutal directness of the statement. There it stood in black and white—the death sentence on their country.

" There you are, gentlemen ; chapter and verse ! *Forward*, organ of the German Social Democratic Party, in its issue of the twentieth of October, 1918."

" But that is rank treason ! "

" The party that governs, gentlemen—and has done for some time past ! "

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Now they knew whom Beatty had to thank for his easily-won triumph.

As mist and twilight were obscuring the massive outlines of the Forth Bridge and the first lights began to shine out from the shore, at the mast-head of the German ships the signal was hoisted for the crews to fall in on the quarter-deck.

Seventy-three Ensigns—the Iron Cross on a black-white-and-red field—fluttered out once more.

Three fifty-seven.

In every ship the same scene was enacted.

The yeoman of signals went to the voice-pipe and called down from the bridge :

" Lower ! "

But the voice of the officer of the watch, despite the long habit of command, trembled as he gave the well-known order :

" Upper-deck, attention ! *Haul down the flag !* "

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SAVING THE HONOUR OF THE BETRAYED FLEET

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INTERNED

Scapa Flow.

The Grand Fleet's hiding-place.

Otto Weddigen's grave.

Now the place of internment of the High Seas Fleet.

The wind was driving grey clouds, heavy with rain, across the bay.

The peaks and hills of the Orkney Islands were scarcely distinguishable through the murk. The day, curtained by dark clouds, was chill and sullen. Only where the sun strove vainly to pierce the grey mist did a livid brightness appear.

The surrendered German warships, disarmed and emasculated, were lying at anchor off Cava Island, at the western exit of the broad bay.

In unbroken succession the waves came bearing down, pounding with a dull roar against the ships' sides and spurting through the gun-ports into the casemates. Squalls of rain swept over the forlorn decks. The betrayed ships tugged impotently at their anchor-cables, and heaved up and down as though trembling and groaning for very shame.

The torpedo-boats were moored together in groups, and the high-running seas dashed them against one another with a sound of thunder. The air here was saturated with water, whipped to fine spray.

There was no flag to show the nationality of the torpedo-boats and battleships, only the Admiral's lonely flag flying from the light cruiser *Emden*.

Comfortless and gloomy as the bay itself was the state

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of affairs aboard the German ships. Cooped in a narrow space, men were waging a mean and evil struggle against one another.

Five months of internment had cleft the crews into two camps. The weak, the fickle, the indifferent had all fallen under the spell of unscrupulous Communist agitators. But the latter had perforce to moderate their claims; for the guns of the British squadron keeping guard furnished too palpable a commentary on the brotherhood of nations.

* * * * *

The Commanding Officer of one of the interned battleships slammed his office door behind him. He flung himself into the chair, and pressed his hands against his throbbing temples.

His Admiral had just given him a sharp talking-to because he had dared to suggest that they might seek release from this dishonourable position by scuttling their ships.

His eyes burned. Was everyone trammelled in this boundless lunacy? Yet despite the stern refusal, had he not seemed to see a gleam in the Admiral's eye? Through the open scuttle of the office came the hum of engines as the Admiral's launch passed by. The Captain rose to his feet and gazed yearningly after the man in whose hands reposed the honour of Germany's once proud Fleet.

Meanwhile the launch was speeding towards the flagship *Emden*.

Admiral Ludwig von Reuter was looking fixedly ahead, lost in thought.

Once again he had had to speak sternly to a brother officer for suggesting the scuttling of the ships. Once again he had had to say things in which he himself did not believe, things that pained him. But it was necessary

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to act thus if he was to preserve the secret in his heart until the moment came for action.

It comforted him to receive proof from every hand that there were still men ready to save the honour of the betrayed ships. His grave face lighted up. Moments such as this atoned for sordid weeks and months of internment.

* * * * *

A ship of the *König* class.

The forward battery was in an uproar. The members of the " Red Guard " were under the influence of a too-liberal indulgence in alcohol, and drink had fired their revolutionary enthusiasm. Their leader was addressing an incendiary harangue to the smoke-filled flat. Idiotic applause greeted each hackneyed catch-word. His audience were gulping down brandy by the half-pint from their tin mugs. The whole ship echoed to their screams and yells. Outside, British patrol boats were circling round the uproarious vessel. Two powerfully built petty-officers were standing with folded arms at the bulkhead door leading to the starboard casemate, looking on disgustedly at the unbridled disorder. Both flaunted the black-white-and-red cockade above their cap-bands. From the moment they appeared in the doorway they had been the butt of scornful taunts.

" Traitors ! "—" Blackguards ! "—" Louts ! "—" Get out of it ! "—" Land him one ! " shouted the Reds in chorus. A tin mug struck one of the petty-officers on his broad chest. Other missiles followed, amid the mocking laughter of the tipsy mob.

Then, without warning, two powerful figures leaped like panthers across the low compartment. A couple of seconds later the chief agitator was flung through the air into the midst of his bellowing Red audience. A second orator crashed on to a mess table, which collapsed under

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the impetus of his fall. In the ensuing turmoil the yelling Comrades began to belabour one another. The two petty-officers joined in the fray, aided by loyal sailors. Before long the last of the followers of Rosa Luxemburg had fled, badly damaged, through the port-side bulkhead door. Order was restored on board again.

Without uttering a word, the petty-officers turned to go aft and report the incident to their superiors, as duty enjoined.

• • • • •

Rioting and acts of violence were becoming more and more frequent. Disorders and mutinies convulsed the internment zone. The honourable elements among the petty-officers and men organised themselves to resist the excesses of the Reds. Serious clashes appeared to be inevitable ; and the crews were consequently faced with the danger of intervention by the British.

Admiral von Reuter proceeded resolutely to a further reduction of the crews.

Berlin and London readily assented.

In the middle of June the transports arrived at Scapa Flow.

On the seventeenth of the month the last steamer left for Germany bearing the remainder of the men discharged from the big cruiser *Seydlitz*.

The Admiral had successfully carried out a general purge of all unreliable, superfluous and Spartacist elements from among the crews.

• • • • •

Commander Schumann read through for the second time the Order from his Admiral which had just been delivered by the British mail tender.

There it was in black and white :

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INTERNMENT ZONE COMMAND
Order No. 39.

June 17, 1919.

FOR OFFICERS ONLY

Personal

To all Commanding Officers and Destroyer Captains.

(1) The necessary preparations for scuttling the ships are to be made immediately, in such a manner that the vessel can be sunk as quickly as possible on receipt of the order.

(2) Final preparations are to be made only after the crews have been taken off. Commanding Officers must use their own discretion in deciding whether individual ratings may take part in these preparations, and be informed of the intention, without there being any risk of endangering the success of the plan, as, for example, by relations with the British.

. . . . .

(5) Scuttling is to take place :

(*a*) In case the British occupy the ship by force.

(*b*) On receipt of a special order from me.

Further instructions, including the scuttling-signal, followed. The final paragraph ran :

(12) Commanding Officers must keep this document under lock and key. Under no circumstances must it fall into the enemy's hands.

He heaved a deep sigh of relief. The raging thoughts within him were stilled. Yet the hardest thing of all was to come—the parting from this ship of his, that was once so proud. But she should not fall into the hands of the British ; for that he would answer with his life. As he

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locked up the order, his eye fell on the Ensign lying on the shelf. He took it out and spread it over the narrow table. Full of affection he gazed at the lovely flag. Soon it would be flying for the last time above the *Markgraf*. The thought of it wrung his heart. He must try not to think.

He made haste to lock the Ensign up again, and went out of the cabin to attend to the first preparations for scuttling his ship.

• • • • •

The battle-cruiser *Derfflinger*.

Life had departed from the great ship. Deathly stillness on the lower deck. Sepulchral silence aft.

Through the hatchways between-decks rose a chill breath as from a vault. The curse of treachery lay heavy on the armoured warrior of the seas.

All at once the muffled sound of footfalls broke the silence of the empty compartments, reverberating with a hollow, sinister echo. The Commanding Officer was making his round of inspection.

All the bulkhead-doors, the hatches, the bunker and alleyway bulkheads, and the doors of the storerooms and other compartments below the water-line, were fixed in such a way that they would remain open. Scuttles, ventilators and dead-lights were similarly propped open.

Everything was in readiness for sending the vessel to the bottom. A few hand-turns, and water would flow into the ship through torpedo-tubes, Kingston valves, and condensers.

The Captain nodded in bitter satisfaction.

The impotent guns in the casemates seemed to be looking at him with mute reproach. Every action station bore the shameful brand of disarmament.

This last round of the ship had graven deep furrows in his brow.

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The suspense mounted to an unbearable pitch.
It could not last long.

* * * * *

The Summer Solstice!
Token of re-birth!
Promise of things to come!
Scapa Flow Bay was mantled in a fiery glow.
The sun, harbinger of new life, mounted slowly higher and higher into the cloudless blue sky on that morning of the twenty-first of June, 1919.
The German vessels, in their fresh coat of light paint, gleamed like beacons, and seemed once again to don their former might and greatness. But dark and threatening as Destiny itself lay the big, black-painted battleships of the British guard squadron.
Thickening clouds of smoke showed that these ships were raising steam, and at about nine o'clock in the morning the whole squadron, including the destroyers, raised anchor and put to sea.
An hour later they had disappeared below the horizon.

* * * * *

The flagship *Emden*.
The departure of the British squadron had been watched.
A pointer of Fate.
Commander Oldekop went straight to Admiral von Reuter.
"The departure of the British looks suspicious. In two hours from now the Armistice will expire. The Allies are demanding the unconditional surrender of our ships. There is no possibility of this Peace Treaty being accepted!"
He urged all this in forceful language upon his Commander-in-Chief.

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Time was pressing.

Admiral von Reuter's conscience was clear.

As a Naval Commander-in-Chief in foreign waters, cut off from communication with home, it was his duty to take independent action in case of emergency, danger, or war. As things now stood, Germany would once more enter into a state of war with Britain at noon. Thereupon a further precept would become operative: "German warships must not be allowed to fall into enemy hands." The interned ships were completely disarmed, and there could therefore be no question of giving honourable battle. Thus, there remained but one way out—to scuttle the vessels immediately.

Every moment's hesitation might imperil success.

The hour had come to act! At ten-forty the historic signal was given from the signal-bridge.

"To all Commanding Officers and torpedo-boat commanders. Endorse paragraph 11. C.-in-C. Squadron 1—4."

That meant: "Scuttle ships immediately!"

From ship to ship the signal ran. Many a petty-officer of signals puzzled over the meaningless phrase, and was more astonished still when he was ordered to reply:

"Paragraph 11 endorsed. Commanding Officer, *Seydlitz—Kaiser—Derfflinger*."

TO THE BOTTOM

The crew of the battleship *König Albert* started up in terror from their rest. The whistle of the boatswain's pipe shrilled abruptly along all the decks.

"All hands leave the ship! All hands leave the ship!"

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The shout went echoing through the empty compartments.

On the upper-deck all was rush and bustle.

Boats were lowered.

The diminished crew, carrying kit-bags and bundles, came hurrying up through the hatchways and ran to the quarter-deck. Something was fluttering there above them.

They looked up and saw the old Ensign blowing, fresh and unsullied.

Their eyes shone, and their hearts swelled with pride.

Then all at once the ship's bell aboard the *Friedrich der Grosse* began to toll. The flagship of the Fleet at Jutland led the way now on this last voyage to the bottom. She was the first to heel over and slip silently into the deep.

The men got into the boats. There was a rushing and roaring sound in the ship ; the *König Albert* was steadily sinking lower and lower in the water. The rumbling within her was like distant thunder. The boats cast off. Just in time. The great ship heeled over on her side. The sea rushed gurgling in through her scuttles. It was the end. One final heave. Spurting columns of water. Then the *König Albert* was swallowed by the waves. Three harsh, masculine cheers sped her as she sank.

Immense bubbles and fragments of wreckage came frothing up where she had vanished.

It was one o'clock.

For one last time, in the ruin of those days, a great moment and a mighty deed united all the men.

Boat after boat put off from the sinking ships. Again and again cheers rang out in last salute across the sea.

The doughty light cruiser *Brummer*, the battle cruiser *Moltke*, the battleships *Kronprinz Wilhelm*, *Kaiser*, *Prinzregent Luitpold* and *Grosser Kurfürst*, the light

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cruiser *Dresden*—all went to the bottom with Ensigns flying.

An immense annihilation of material values. A mighty deed of lofty idealism. Some of the ships reared high in the air, as if in agonising throes, wrenching their anchor cables asunder. The coats of arms on their bows gleamed in the bright sunshine. From their ventilating shafts and funnels the escaping air threw up great cascades of water. It was as though living creatures were breathing their last.

Officers and men were swimming about among the floating wreckage and life-belts.

Then bullets began to whizz over the sea. Without the least deliberation British craft on guard duty dashed hither and thither among the boats, as though possessed. The British crews fired blindly with revolvers and rifles upon the crowded boats and upon the swimmers.

Screams from wounded German sailors. Oaths and imprecations from the British. Machine-gun fire. Though the Germans showed the white flag, the British still continued to fire.

* * * * *

The men of the cruiser lying in front of the *Hindenburg* were standing on the quarter-deck, ready to take to the boats. The officer of the watch and a signaller were still on the after bridge.

"Upper-deck, attention! Hoist the flag!"

The young officer's voice sounded to the men below like a lamentation. The other officers sprang to the salute. No trumpet note blared exultingly to Heaven; but each man paid a last homage to the old, betrayed flag.

Once again it mounted to the masthead, blowing gently in the breeze.

The stern and weather-beaten faces were convulsed with strong emotion. Every man wept unashamed tears.

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Unspeakable sorrow seemed ready to burst their hearts. There was the flag again, flying to-day for the first and last time after six long months. The order, "Stand at ease!" sounded like the strangled cry of a dying heart.

Then British destroyers came speeding out of the harbour. Bullets whistled about the ears of the petty-officer making fast the halliards. A dull thud. The officer of the watch fell wounded on the deck.

Seamen came hurrying back from the boats.

As the ship sank lower and lower by the stern, they bore their wounded officer to the boat.

Scarcely had the boat put off, when the vessel capsized.

With a weary smile the sub-lieutenant pointed to the Ensign as it vanished in the waves.

* * * * *

The huge vessels of the *Royal Sovereign* class were cruising at half-speed through the blue-green water.

On the forward bridge of H.M.S. *Revenge* stood Vice-Admiral Sir Sidney R. Fremantle, in an attitude of studied composure, reviewing the proud ships of his squadron.

He had been assigned the duty of taking possession of the German warships in two days' time.

The wireless-room messenger came hurrying up to the bridge, and handed the Admiral a report.

"German ships are sinking," he read.

"Damn!" he hissed between his teeth; and the tanned weather-beaten face turned a shade paler. But in a moment his self-control had returned.

"Turn sixteen points," he commanded, "and full speed ahead!"

"The German ships are sinking!"

The news fell like a bombshell among the group of Staff Officers.

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" Clear ship for action ! " sped the order by telephone and voice-pipe to every station.

With roaring engines the mighty vessels raced back to Scapa Flow.

* * * * *

The heroic fighting spirit of officers and men was displayed once more in all its grandeur.

Their enterprise succeeded.

Just before two o'clock the gallant ship *Seydlitz* heeled over. Torrents of water gushed from her scuttles as she capsized to port.

The light cruiser *Köln* was not long in sinking. The battleships *König* and *Kaiserin* and the battle cruiser *Von der Tann* fought to the end. The waves swept over forecastle and quarter-deck, and then immense whirlpools announced the end.

The dreadnought *Bayern* heeled over with a sudden lurch. Her crew scrambled into the waiting boats.

At that moment a British destroyer came charging down upon the ship like a furious bull. A rain of machine-gun fire swept the boats with deadly effect.

Gesticulating wildly, the British ordered the ship-wrecked men out of the boats and back aboard their ship. But the Germans, driven thus to certain death, leaped from the other side of the vessel into the sea.

The light cruiser *Bremse* was grappled by British destroyers.

Armed sailors boarded her, and she was taken in tow.

A grim struggle ensued.

The British must have remembered the bold deeds done by this speedy vessel off the Shetlands. Even under the threat of death, the valiant Lieutenant Schacke succeeded in letting the water into his ship.

The *Bremse* heeled over.

The British destroyers cut the tow-ropes, and picked

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up the men as they jumped from the sinking German ship.

* * * * *

Nearly three o'clock.

The battle cruiser *Derfflinger*, whose name will be for ever linked with the Battle of Jutland, was struggling in the throes of death. Water had already covered her fore and aft; and now the hungry waves crept higher. A strange rumbling, swelling to thunder pitch, burst from the submerged compartments. The sea shuddered. A dying tremor shook the masts. Sheets of flame from the funnels leapt heavenward, to tell old Derfflinger up there that his namesake had saved her honour and was about to plunge into the deep.

Once more the brave ship reared. Then her agony was at an end. With flag flying, she sank into her cool sea-grave.

* * * * *

Driven back from the shore by rifle fire, some forty life-boats were wandering aimlessly about among the sinking ships. The British auxiliary craft were still rushing excitedly hither and thither. The boat from the light cruiser *Köln* narrowly escaped being run down by a drifter. Lieutenant-commander Heinemann was standing erect in the shallow boat. His features were as though carved in stone. He realised well the magnitude of this historic deed. Whichever way he looked he saw fluttering Ensigns, sinking ships, splintering masts sudden pillars of smoke, cascades of water.

Boatswain Philippsen, beside his captain, gazed incredulously upon this orgy of destruction. He vaguely sensed the incomparable grandeur of the deed.

Suddenly the other men leapt to their feet. Clouds of smoke, like great clenched fists, were bearing down upon them.

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The German cheers died away. The sea ran high with immense bow-waves. The British guard squadron was steaming back at full speed. The huge guns, cleared for action, were trained on the remnant of the sinking German ships.

But the British Admiral took in the situation at a glance.

Of the twenty-four big ships, eighteen had already gone to the bottom. Nothing could now be saved. He gave the order to cast anchor.

Meanwhile the torpedo-boats were waging a furious battle. In the centre of the fray was the Sixth Flotilla.

Machine-gun fire. Revolver shots. Hand-to-hand fighting. Man against man. The armed against the defenceless.

Dead and wounded men, British as well as German, were floating in the sea near the ships. The tenacious torpedo-boat sailors refused to give way. They did their job.

Forty-six of the fifty torpedo-boats were sent to the bottom.

* * * * *

It was finished.

But a few ships still kept afloat.

Towards four o'clock the light cruiser *Karlsruhe* was engulfed in the waves. A moving tragedy took place aboard the *Markgraf*. Men from a British drifter shot dead the valiant Commander Schumann and two loyal petty-officers.

But despite acts of terrorism, the scuttling of the ships went on.

At half-past four the *Markgraf* sank.

Only the *Hindenburg* seemed as if she could not die.

Inch by inch the huge vessel sank lower, without

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listing from her upright position. When evening came her funnel and masts were still projecting above the gently stirred waters.

* * * * *

On board the British flagship *Revenge* the representatives of two peoples of Nordic stock stood face to face. The German Admiral Ludwig von Reuter reported to the British Admiral, Sir Sidney R. Fremantle: "I gave the order to scuttle the German ships, and am solely responsible for all the consequences."

For answer, Fremantle declared Admiral von Reuter a prisoner of war, and ordered him to be led away by a guard of Royal Marines, with fixed bayonets.

While the German seamen, petty-officers, warrant-officers and commissioned officers were being taken as prisoners aboard the British warships, the setting sun spread a purple mantle over the grave of the German Fleet. The peaks of the Orkney Islands glowed as torches for the dead. The waves, washing around the mast-tops that projected above the water here and there like churchyard crosses, were whispering of the imperishable glory of the sunken ships.

Then darkness descended like a benediction over Scapa Flow.

* * * * *

The Summer Solstice.

Turning-point of the sun—turning-point of Destiny.

Wireless messages announce the moving end of the second German Fleet. Millions of Germans lift up their heads.

The world is harkening.

This first manly deed shines out like a torch in the night and misery of the German soul.

The honour of the betrayed Fleet is saved.

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TOWARDS THE THIRD GERMAN FLEET

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Versailles weighs heavily upon Germany.

Vast regions on the Rhine, in Upper Silesia, West Prussia and Schleswig-Holstein seized by the enemy or under occupation.

East Prussia cut off from the Reich.

Danzig, now a Free city, encircled by Poland.

The German rivers and the Baltic-North Sea canal internationalised.

Three hundred pacifist deputies in the Reichstag.

Above this humiliation and disgrace another flag is flying.

Kiel.

The broad spaces of the Imperial naval port are empty. The many buoys are rocking all forlorn on the grey waters. Screaming gulls are wheeling around the tokens of Germany's lost naval power.

Wilhelmshaven.

The great harbour basins, with their quay walls and landing-stages, are lifeless now. The shadow of misery lies heavy on the deserted berths.

" Long Henry " reaches out no longer over the vast tracts of the Imperial dockyard. The red flag set the seal of fate on the huge crane. Like a felled giant it was dragged away into captivity, a Reparations delivery.

The pitiful remnant of what was once the Imperial Fleet drag out a miserable existence.

The enemy, as though to mock us, has left four antiquated battleships, six old light cruisers, eighteen torpedo-boats and a few dozen minesweepers.

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"HOIST THE FLAG!" ONCE AGAIN

Six years later.

The forces of self-defence are stirring again in Germany.

A miracle of German shipbuilding ushers in the construction of the third German navy.

The cruiser *Emden*.

Smart appearance; slender bows; fighting-mast; two funnels; long, low after-deck.

Within, a masterpiece of naval craftsmanship. Excellent allocation of space. First-class materials. The lighting installation, electric lifts, fire-extinguishing equipment, heating apparatus and other features of the vessel all furnish a marvellous testimony to the excellence of Germany's industrial products.

Displacement: 6,000 tons.
Length: 493 feet.
Speed: 32 knots.
Armament: 6-inch guns. Torpedo-tubes.
Crew: 500 men.

* * * * *

The ceremony of placing the *Emden* in commission.

A calm gladness spreads over the crowd, gazing up at the splendid ship and waiting in joyful expectation for her to hoist her flag and pennant for the first time. Old memories begin to stir. Timid, groping, hesitant. It takes time to break down the artificial barriers which the disintegrators of the German nation have set up between officer and workman, civilian and soldier. But the spectacle of this unique vessel unites them all, and brings home to each the urgency of reaffirming Germany's might upon the seas.

Right forward, where the Iron Cross looks down from

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the ship's bows, stand a number of ex-Navy men and two or three dockyard hands.

Fair-haired Ahlers, retired leading-seaman, declares in an undertone: "The International, the brotherhood of man, and world disarmament are nothing but a fraud. And Wilson's Fourteen Points were the biggest fraud of the lot!"

He is about to continue, when the "all hands" whistle shrills on the deck above. The old and well-remembered bo'sun's pipe sounds alluringly in their ears, reviving memories of long ago.

"All hands aft!"

The word of command is in their very bones, and they can scarce refrain from running to obey it.

From the ship comes a sound like the fluttering and twittering of scared birds in a tree.

The petty-officers of the watch bear the order swiftly from compartment to compartment. Doors are banging, keys are rattling; shouts echo through the casemates. The crew come surging up on deck through every hatchway and bulkhead door.

In rank and file stand officers, warrant-officers, petty-officers and men.

The old spectacle of German discipline once more.

The Commanding Officer is speaking:

". . . The High Seas Fleet, pride of all Germans, is no more. Those old fortresses of steel are lying at the bottom of the sea all over the world. The mere list of sunken ships presents to us a glowing picture of the lofty heroism of German sailors and their readiness to make the supreme sacrifice. One battleship, seven cruisers, seventeen light cruisers, ten gun-boats, six special ships, one hundred and eleven torpedo-boats, one hundred and ninety-nine submarines, twenty-nine destroyers, sixteen auxiliary cruisers, and one hundred and seventy mine-

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sweepers, trawlers and other auxiliary vessels—all these went to the bottom with flag flying, after desperate fights. And at Scapa Flow fifteen battleships, six light cruisers, and forty-six torpedo-boats were scuttled. Let us carry on the time-honoured tradition of loyalty and devotion to duty."

The crowd beside the vessel press closer. The cap-ribbons of the sailors on deck flutter gently in the rising breeze.

"The very name of *Emden* imposes a high responsibility on every man of the crew. Take a brief glance at the days before the war. German cruisers in foreign waters. The colourful life of southern climes. Gay festivals in foreign ports. A succession of fresh impressions widens the outlook of the crews. Valparaiso, Tierra del Fuego, Cape Horn, Rio de Janeiro. A variegated chain of the world's most lovely places. Then the outbreak of war. German cruisers scattered over the seven seas. Ensigns flying. Eventful cruises. A war of piracy. The *Emden* bombards Madras. Destruction of the Russian cruiser *Jemtchug*, and the French ship *Mousquet*. Resumed commerce destruction in the Indian Ocean. Outnumbered by the British. A desperate battle until the last gun is put out of action. Then comes the end. The Captain runs his battered ship ashore off the Cocos Islands."

A wave of emotion sweeps the ranks. The Commanding Officer goes on.

"The second *Emden* had to make the bitter voyage to Scapa Flow. Years of deep humiliation lie behind us. Before us now is a period of stern and difficult renunciation.

"We must look forward with divining eyes into the future. History always repeats itself, and therefore I would recall to every single one of you those inspiring lines of Johann Gottlieb Fichte :

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"Be steadfast in your faith. Your country's woes
Shall pass, and Germany shall rise again.
Believe this only, though more bitter blows
Shall torture you to think that faith is vain.

"And in the faith you hold, remember still—
Germany's cause is yours, to make or mar.
Look not to others. Yours, for good or ill,
The toil, the effort, and the triumph far."

Solemn silence reigns over the ship. Then the band begins to play. Spontaneous song bursts from the crowd, leaps up to the *Emden*, and mingles with the singing of the sailors to form a mighty symphony. "*Deutschland über Alles*" mounts like an anthem to Heaven.

Then silence once more.

Roll of drums. The upper-deck watch stands to arms.

Then the word of command for flag parade:

"Upper-deck, attention! Hoist the colours!"

The band strikes up a ceremonial march. Slowly the flag begins to climb the mast. A hesitant wind tugs gently at it, recognises the colours of the Ensign, and quickly unfurls it for all to see. The black-white-and-red ground gleams bright and clear in the sunshine, and the superimposed Iron Cross seems an inseparable part of the whole. A mighty wave of cheering surges up to the ship when the flag is hoisted. The band strikes up again. The Naval March. Seductive as the rising west wind comes the prelude, swelling to a tempest as all the instruments join in, then sinking before it merges at last into the Song of the Flag.

"Now proudly from our foretop blow
The colours black-white-red."

The crowd beside the ship join in the song:

"And death awaits our country's foe,
Dares he to lift his head."

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Still louder swells the music :

" The flag that guards the shores of home,
And flutters in the breeze."

The sailors lift up their voices in glad anticipation of days to come :

" Is flying too above the foam
Of distant, storm-tossed seas."

And then, like a pledge of eternal loyalty, comes the final verse :

" O, flag of honour and of fame,
We pledge our lives to thee.
Unsullied be they glorious name
For ever on the sea ! "

" Hurrah ! "

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